

ARCTURUS.

No. VIII.

The Career

OF

PUFFER HOPKINS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE MOTLEY BOOK."

CHAPTER III.

THE BOTTOM CLUB.

PUNCTUAL to his appointment with Hobbleshank, Puffer Hopkins, at a few minutes of seven o'clock the next evening, directed his steps towards Barrell's oyster-house, where in due time he arrived, and made discovery of one of the most singular little oyster-houses that could be found throughout the whole of oyster-eating Christendom. Mr. Jarve Barrell, it would seem, had, in the golden age of his career, been the proprietor of a large Public House, occupying an entire building and surrounded by his regiments of waiters and wine-bottles, whose services were clamorously and steadily demanded, by a mob of customers, from six in the evening until one, morning; in fact the poor man's head had been

half-turned, by the pressure of a prosperous and growing business. But, somehow or other, oysters, one unlucky season, grew smaller, waiters more impudent for their pay, and custom walked out of that street into the next on a visit to a new landlord, who served his stews with silver spoons and his oysters in scollop-shells; so that poor Jarve Barrell was compelled, in spite of himself, to clip his wings and confine himself to a humbler cage: in a word, he rented his second floor to a boarding-house keeper, took in a barber at the rear of the first floor, and continued business on his own account in the front room of the same. A second decrease in the size of shell-fish, the opening of a street that carried travel in another direction, and Barrell was forced into that last stronghold of the oyster-man, the cellar; and there it was that Puffer Hopkins now found him, standing on one leg of his own and one that came out of a fine piece of oak woods at West Farms, a coarse white apron about his waist and a salamander in his countenance, declaring stoutly to a customer that although he had roughed it against the tide all his life, he was determined to have his own way in dying.

Being questioned as to the way to which he alluded, he proceeded to explain, that whenever he felt the approaches of death he should hire a White-haller to pull him over to Staten Island, cast anchor just above the richest bed in the shore, and giving one good deep plunge, said Jarve Barrell, I'll carry myself to the bottom, and stretching myself out on a picked oyster-bed, make up my mind to die; so with the tide rippling over my head, and a dozen or more pretty mermaids standing about me, I'll give up the ghost, and hold myself entitled to haunt the Bay and Island ever after, with a spruce ruffle of sea-weeds in my bosom.

Puffer Hopkins was well pleased with the joyous spirit of the decayed oyster-man, but had scarcely heard him through when he detected a quick clatter upon the steps, and turning, he discovered his singular companion of the previous night hurrying down. In a moment he had Puffer by the hand, and hailed his appearance with a sort of wondering enthusiasm as if it gave him great joy to find him there and to take him again in a friendly grasp. Hobbleshank interchanged a few words with Mr. Jarve Barrell as to the influence of certain recent enactments relating to oyster-beds upon his own trade and custom, to which Mr. Jarve Barrell gave very lucid and convincing replies, and they set out

forthwith for the Bottom Club. This they were not long in finding, for Hobbleshank guiding Puffer rapidly through sundry dark alleys and bye-ways, for which he seemed to have a peculiar inclination, they reached a building in front of which a dusky lamp was glimmering, ascended two flights of stairs, and knocked at a low dingy door.

The door was opened from within, and Puffer advancing, with Hobbleshank in front, found himself in a long narrow room, with a plain pine table stretched through the centre, a forlorn-looking eagle, with a bunch of arrowy skewers in its talons and a striped flag about its head for a turban, two or three carpenters' benches along the walls, and the whole lighted by four sombre tallow twopennies at the farthest extremity.

Upon the table was planted a large earthen pitcher, with an emblematic toper with his leg cocked up, in a state of happy exaltation, displayed on the side thereof in white ware—and around the board were established a dozen individuals or more, constituting the chief force of the immortal Bottom Club.

The gentlemen of the Bottom Club, as they presented themselves at that moment to Puffer Hopkins, certainly furnished a remarkable spectacle; the most remarkable feature of which was, that all the large members of the Club, by some inscrutable fatality, were constrained and restricted in small hats and irksome jackets, while all the small members, by some equally potent dispensation, were allowed to revel in an unlimited wilderness of box-coat, petersham and tarpaulin. The delicate gentlemen wore great rough neck-stocks, and commanded huge iron snuff-boxes on the table: and the robust and muscular members assumed dainty black ribbons and elegant turn-down collars, with more or less ruffle crisping up under their broad heavy-bearded chins.

A thin, thoughtful gentleman, at one corner of the table, was enveloped in an overgrown vest, hideous with great red vines creeping all over it, and large enough to serve the purpose of a body coat: and confronting him, at an opposite corner, sate a stout omnibus-driver, making himself as comfortable as he could in a waistcoat, so many sizes too small, that it gaped apart like a pair of rebellious book-covers, and drew his arms into a posture that resembled not a little that of the wings of a great Muscovy gander prepared for the spit.

"We welcome you," said the pale thoughtful man, rising and extending his right hand toward Puffer as he advanced, while with his left he secured the sails of his great red vest, "We welcome you, Mr. Hopkins, to this association of brethren. In us you see exemplified the progress of Social Reform: we are wearing each others' coats and breeches in a simultaneous confusion, and, laboring under a passional excitement, we may yet ameliorate our condition so far as to undertake to pay each others' debts. We are subjecting ourselves to a great experiment for the benefit of mankind, the interests of the total race. You see what hardships we are undergoing"—he did, for at the mere mention of the thing, the whole Club wriggled in their ill-assorted garments like so many clowns in the very crisis of a contortion—"to test the principles of an ameliorated condition of things. Yet, sir, we are happy, very happy to see you here to-night: this spot on which you stand is consecrated to freedom of opinion; to the festival of the soul. This is no Musical Forest, no Hindoo Hunters' Hut, got up for effect at the amphitheatre: we haven't trees here alive with real birds! the branches laden with living monkies! the fountains visited by long-legged Flamingoes! the greensward covered with Gazelles, grazing and sporting! Oh, no: we are a mere caucus of plain citizens, in our every-day dresses, sitting in this small room on rough benches to re-organize society, and give the world a new axle: that's all."

Hereupon the thoughtful gentleman sate down; the Club looked at each other and shook their heads, as much as to say, "This Chairman of ours, is, certainly, a born genius"; and Puffer and Hobbleshank were earnestly invited to the upper end of the board, where they could possess the immediate society of the intellectual president, with the convenient solace of the beer-pitcher. As soon as they were seated, and furnished with a draught from the earthen jug to make them feel at home, (a man always feeling most at home when his wits are abroad), the legitimate business of the Club proceeded with great spirit.

The first subject that was brought before them was, a general consultation as to the part the Club—the friends of Social Reform and a Re-organization of Society—should play in the approaching election of a Mayor for the City and County of New-York: something striking and decisive being always expected from the redoubted Bottom Club. One

member hinted and proposed that there should be a general destruction of the enemy's handbills ; which was amended so as to embrace a thrashing of the enemy's bill-stickers, wherever found ; which was still further enlarged, so as to cover the special case of freighting a hostile bill-sticker's cart with building-stone and breaking a bill-sticker's donkey's back. The cutting of flag-ropes and sawing down of liberty-poles next came up, and passed promptly—a stout man in a small roundabout asseverating vehemently that the price of fire-wood should be brought down, if he staid up till midnight three nights in the week to accomplish the benevolent object. The Club then proceeded to preamble and resolve that they considered the liberty of the citizens of this metropolis in imminent danger, and that they would protect the same at the hazard of their lives : by which the Bottom Club meant, that they would hold themselves prepared to breed a riot at five minutes' notice, if found necessary to prevent a surplus of voters on the opposite side from enjoying the invaluable franchise of depositing their ballots. Two sturdy members belonging to the intellectual and highly refined fraternity of omnibus-drivers, next pledged themselves in the most earnest manner, to conduct their respective vehicles, at such time as might be most apposite, through the centre of any well-dressed crowd that might be in the neighborhood of the Poll, and also to indulge in such incidental flourishes of the whip on their way, as would inevitably persuade the gentry to stand back. As beer and brandy flowed through the Club—which they did with a marvellous depth and celerity of current—the tide of heady resolution deepened ; and they at length, in their extreme heat and fervor, determined to throw off their coats to a man, and enjoy a regular breakdown dance about the table.

With wonderful alacrity they carried this judicious resolution into effect, by disrobing themselves of coats, shad-bellies and jackets, and casting them into a heap on a sailor's chest established under the eagle's wing. They then, hand in hand, Hobbleshank and Puffer Hopkins joining in, commenced capering in a circle, dashing down, first the right heel and then the left, with astonishing energy, and as if they were driving in the nails of the floor all over again ; meantime roaring out the tag-ends of a partizan song, which intimated that, They were the boys so genteel and civil, That cared not a straw for Nick nor the Devil: with other choice

sentiments metrically stated. While they were immersed in this elegant recreation, a single gentleman—a member of the Club—who did not choose to partake thereof, sate apart indulging in his own profound cogitations. He was in many respects a peculiar personage, and seemed to enjoy a copy-right way of his own; which copy-right might have borne date as early as his birth and entrance into the world,—for Nature had given him a pale, chalky countenance, a sort of blank betwixt youth and age, a pair of knavish grey eyes, always turned upward, and a nose of the same class, which appeared most honestly to sympathize with them: he was of a small, shrunken figure, with a slight indication of a hump at the shoulders, long, thin fingers, and legs of a somewhat mis-shapen and imperfect character.

This singular little gentleman, as we said, sate apart indulging in his own thoughts; the purport of which appeared presently to be, a determination to investigate and scrutinize the pockets of the various coats, jackets and shad-bellies, which had been laid aside by the dancers, for to this task he now assiduously applied himself, and while his companions were enjoying themselves in their way, he enjoyed himself in his own way, by divesting them of such of their contents as suited his purposes, whatever they might be. In this general scrutiny it would have been an impeachment of his talents as an inquisitor to have charged him with neglecting the remotest corner or out-of-the-way borough of the apparel either of Hobbleshank or Puffer Hopkins.

Having accomplished this undertaking to his own satisfaction, he established himself at a side of the long table, planted a fur cap of great antiquity, after a drunken fashion, over his brows, dropped his head upon his folded arms, and devoted himself with great apparent zeal and sincerity, to the business of sleeping.

Meantime the gentlemen of the Bottom Club had wearied of their sport, and oppressed by beer and hard work, they dropped into their seats.

The pitcher went round, once, twice and thrice, and by this time they had attained an elevation of conduct and expression that was truly sublime to behold. The heavy-bearded man swore and laughed, and dashed his fist upon the table, with the uproar of half a dozen bakers at kneading time. The two omnibus-drivers, for some unknown, and at this remote period from the event, un conjecturable cause,

entered solemnly into a set-to, in which much muscle and science were displayed, and which ended in a most fraternal embrace under the table.

A cadaverous thoughtful man—not the chairman—who was no talker but a wonderful deep thinker and metaphysician, grew mysterious and communicative, and hinted that he had that in the pocket of his swallow-tail which would raise a devil of a ferment if the public but knew of it.

A fifth associate of the Club, who still retained an insufficient hat planted jauntily on his head, thought it would be a capital idea—a very capital idea—a devilish first-rate idea in the way of a social re-organization—to get together a parcel of gilt steeple-balls, and hatch out a brood of young churches by clapping a bishop upon them.

Another gentleman was inclined to think that the Bottom Club had better mind its own business, by petitioning the Common Council to have jugglers appointed Inspectors of election, who could pass into the ballot-box two tickets for one on their own side, and no tickets for ever so many on the other.

A wide-mouthed member, the author of the ditty that had been sung, and clerk and bell-ringer to a neighboring market, became horribly sentimental, shed tears in his beer, and kissed his hand to the eagle at the other end of the room. As the entertainments were manifestly drawing to an end, Hobbleshank glanced warily towards Puffer Hopkins, and made for the door: but they were not let off so easily,—for simultaneous with the rising of Puffer Hopkins was that of the entire Bottom Club; and a general friendly assault was begun upon the person of that worthy young gentleman.

First, the gentlemen of the Club insisted on shaking hands all round toward the right, and then all round toward the left; one or two were resolved to embrace him, and did so; and at last, after the pantomime, there was an unanimous call for a speech from that gentleman, which summons was, however, without a discovery of the substitution on the part of the astute members of the Bottom Club, responded to by Hobbleshank after his own peculiar fashion, with a very happy allusion to the striped flag and the refreshments.

The unshorn man hoped Puffer Hopkins would come again, and vowed he was his friend to command, from the state of Maine to Cape May; and the metaphysical

deep thinker, struggling manfully with the beer he had imbibed, promised next time to communicate something of vital consequence to the welfare of this Union: with which promises, protestations and God-speeds, Hobbleshank and Hopkins departed.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. FYLER CLOSE AND HIS CUSTOMERS.

It cannot be denied that Mr. Fyler Close had selected his lodgings with commendable thrift and discretion. A single small apartment over a bakery, and looking out upon a public pump, supplied him at the lowest current rate with the three primary necessities of life; namely, warmth, from the bi-daily inflammation of the oven for the benefit of neighboring families—biscuits, the legitimate spawn of the oven—and water, the cheap creature of corporate benevolence. It could scarcely be expected that sundry fat spiders that kept their webs in the different corners of his room would be incorporated in any of the banquets of Mr. Fyler Close, although by many people they might have been regarded as a respectable addition thereto. With the exception of its inhabitants, the single small apartment was almost wholly void—there being no covering upon the floor, no curtains at the window, no paper upon the walls, and not the slightest semblance of a fire, past, present or future, on the deserted hearth-stone. To be sure, if you had opened a narrow door on one side, you might have detected in a cramped closet a pair of coverlids in which Mr. Close was in the habit of sheathing his meagre limbs every night, as a nominal protection against chilblains and rheumatism: while the door of the closet was carefully fastened and secured within, from a fear which the occupant somehow or other encouraged, that he should be roused some unlucky morning with a heavy hand on his throat, a big grim face bending over him, and his pockets all picked clean.

In the outer room stood a dilapidated candle-stand, covered with a tattered baize, with a battered inkstand and two stumpy pens lying upon the same; three chairs with decayed bottoms; and, in the corner of the hearth, a single long gloomy poker, with its head up the chimney.

The advantages of these commodious quarters were, at the present juncture, enjoyed by Mr. Fyler Close himself, who being a short, hard-visaged gentleman, in a great blue coat some three sizes too large for him, and a pair of ambitious trowsers that climbed his legs disdaining intercourse with a pair of low cheap-cut shoes, became the accommodations admirably. There was another, a long, spare personage, with a countenance so marked, and scarred, and written all over with ugly lines and seams, as to resemble a battered tomb-stone; and having old decayed teeth that disclosed themselves whenever he opened his mouth, the fancy of uncouth dry bones sticking out at the corner of a grave was still further kept up. There was something extremely sinister in the features of this individual, who sate in the nook between the closet and chimney-piece, and constantly glared about him, in a restless manner, as if the air swarmed wherever he looked with unusual sounds, and as if he caught sudden sight of faces by no means pleasant to look upon.

"I don't see that I could have managed my little monies much better," said Mr. Fyler Close, "unless I had locked them up in an iron safe, and buried the key under the walls of the house. There's only about four hours—and they're at dead midnight—when my debtors could slip away from me; and then they'd have to do it devilish cautiously, Leycraft, not to be heard. See, sir! I am in the very centre of all my investments, and have a watch on them like an auctioneer at the height of his sales. You see that yellow house? I make the owner keep his shutters open, because I have a mortgage on his piano—which I wouldn't lose sight of for the world."

"Quite an eye for music, I should think!" interposed his companion.

"And a pretty good ear, too," continued Mr. Close, "for if I should fail to hear my little blacksmith's hammer in the old forge, off this way, I should go distracted. It soothes me very much to hear that anvil ringing from early light down to broad dusk: and you can't tell what a comfort it is to me when I'm sick!"

"Is he punctual in his interest?" asked Mr. Leycraft, well knowing that the Fine Arts must be associated in Mr. Fyler Close's mind with some such disagreeable contingency.

"Exemplary, sir:—and when he falls sick and can't make a racket himself, he always sends round word and employs a couple of boys to keep it up, just to satisfy my mind. If the

forge stopped for two days, I should be under the necessity of coming down on his shop with a sharp-clawed writ—which would be very painful.”

“Excruciating, I should think,” said Mr. Leycraft, smiling grimly; “It would give you a sort of moral rheumatism, I’ve no doubt!”

“You know it would!” rejoined Fyler Close, returning the smile. “Then here’s the baker—he can’t run away without my smelling the fresh loaves as they go into the cart: and the haberdasher over the way in front, couldn’t escape me unless she undertook to dress up all her male acquaintance in ruffles and false bosoms, and let them out through the alley. That might do, but I guess she isn’t up to it: since she lost her husband she’s gone a little weak in the head, and pays an extra cent on the dollar when she is borrowing from Mr. Fyler Close.”

“These are small gains and slow ones,” said Mr. Leycraft, “You might sit on spiders’ eggs like these for a century, and not hatch out a fortune. Let’s have something bold and dashing—something where you put in no capital and double it to boot in less than a week!”

“Something modelled on the Farm-house affair, eh?” said Fyler Close, leering on his companion significantly.

“Will you let that subject alone, if you please, Mr. Fyler Close!” cried Mr. Leycraft, whose countenance darkened and lowered on his companion as he spake. “We have had talks enough about that cursed house, and one too many. I wish the title-deed was in the right owner’s hands!”

“You do—do you?” urged Mr. Close, pleasantly. “Shall I ask Mrs. Hetty Lettuce, the market-woman, when she comes here next to pay the rent or renew her mortgage, if she can’t find him for us? Perhaps if we paid her well she might relieve us of the property, and provide a very gentlemanly owner in our place. Shall we advertise—offer rewards—post placards? I’ve no doubt if the purlieus of the city were well-dragged, that an heir would turn up.”

“Stuff! Fyler Close, you know well enough that an heir couldn’t be brought alive off either one of the five continents that could make good his claim: and that makes you chuckle so like a fiend. Mrs. Lettuce has lost trace of him for more than twenty years—has grown fat and lazy—borrows money on bond and mortgage, and don’t care a straw about the subject:”—

"Where's your grand project all this time?" interposed Fyler Close. "Shall we have something new to practice our wits on, or shall we rake among our dead schemes for wherewithal to warm our brains with?"

"Now that you are on that," said Mr. Leycraft, rapidly surveying the nooks and privacies of the apartment, and bestowing a broad glare on the door and windows, "I say freely and without the least reserve, that my head's a nine-pin if I don't lay a plan before you will make you thrill down to your pocket-ends with rapture: it's a neat scheme—very neat,—but at the same time mighty magnificent."

Saying this, Leycraft drew close up to the side of the broker, laid their heads close together, and bending over the stand, he moved his finger slowly in a sort of hieroglyphic over it, and tapping his forehead complacently, was about to detail his notable plan, when a knock was heard at the door, which cut short any further communication for the present.

The knock was repeated a little louder; Fyler Close motioned to his companion, who vanished expeditiously down a pair of back-stairs into the yard, looking anxiously back all the time as if under pursuit, and so through the baker's; and Close, snatching from his pocket a well-worn Hymn-book, began reciting a most excellent passage of psalmody, in a deep and nasal intonation.

The knock was repeated three or four times before an invitation was given to enter; and although the broker glanced over the top of his book, as the door opened and discovered his visitor, he assumed not to be conscious of the presence of any person whatever, but proceeded steadily, in fact with rather increased energy, in his capital divertisement. "Please, sir," said the visitor, a stout-built lady, curtsying and advancing timidly a step or two, "Please sir,—what's to be done about the little mor'gage on my grounds, sir?"

This question Fyler Close seemed at first altogether unable to apprehend, but when it was repeated, accompanied by a slight jingle of silver in the visitor's pocket, he started, deposited his book open upon the stand—as if he wished to resume it at the very earliest convenience—looked about him, and pensively remarked, twitching his whiskers, of which there was a dry tuft on either cheek, violently,

"Poor old man!—There's no comfort left for you now, but psalm-singing and class-meetings every other evening in the week. These are old chairs, madam!"

"They certainly are, Mr. Close; very old. There's no denying facts," answered the huckster.

"This is a dreadful dreary room for an old man to live in!" again groaned the broker.

"Sartain!" responded the unwary market-woman, "I think in that point, to do you justice, it's but next better than a family vault, saving the death's heads and the smell."

"And now you ask me, a poor lonesome man, living like Death himself, as you admit, and that can afford to keep no better company than three poor crazy chairs, to renew your mortgage at seven per cent!—why, a cannibal, with good cannibal feelings, wouldn't ask it!"

Mr. Close, on delivery of this speech, fell silent, and dropped into a profound meditation, during which he from time to time looked up and eyed the stout person of the huckster as if he thought it would furnish a most delicate morsel for a Carribee. But his own method of devouring a victim differed essentially from that adopted by the benighted heathen, and he now proceeded to demonstrate his dexterity in his own particular line of manipulation.

"Well, you shall have it!" he cried, awaking as from an anxious reverie: "I have considered it—your business shall be done, Mrs. Lettuce."

"Thank you, sir, thank you, sir! I am very much obliged," exclaimed the market-woman, bowing and curtsying with great show of gratitude, but misapprehending slightly the meaning of Mr. Fyler Close, and promising the accruing interest in hard dollars, punctually on quarter-day.

"But I must have my summer supply of radishes!" said Close.

"Oh, for the trifle of that, master Close—we'll not differ. I can send you down a bunch or two by the girls, every now and then."

"Every now and then will not do, madam:—I must have them regularly, for I can't live without putting a few for sale, in the season of them, at the baker's window, below stairs."

"Well, I don't mind a handful of greens in the way of binding a bargain; so the cart shall stop every morning, if you please, and leave you a dozen bunches."

"Very good, very good," exclaimed the broker, rubbing his hands together, "you are a woman of sense:—and now, I must have my asparagus, that's a dainty herb—I love asparagus dearly—and it sells well when it's early. Mind, I

must have early tops, or none at all ! Pick me the tops that grow near the house, close up by the foundations, will you ?”

Early tops, and such as he desired, were accordingly promised, perforce : Mrs. Hetty Lettuce diving convulsively into her pockets to make sure of such small change as she had about her, as every thing appeared to be slipping away from her ownership with extraordinary velocity and dispatch.

“ I’ll not ask you,” continued the discriminating Mr. Close, “ to supply me with butter nor with eggs, although something nice might be done with them through my neighbor below—but eggs are quite apt to addle on hand, and butter must be kept in ice, which costs two-pence a pound, and melts without leaving as much as a thank-ye in your pocket.”

“ Your sentiments are very excellent, sir, on that subject,” said Mrs. Lettuce, brightening up.

“ Yes, they are very excellent ; but you’ll think them far nicer on the subject of good worsted stockings made with your own dainty hands, three pair for winter use—I should have three pair at least—and as many more for fall : you know we must guard against frosts and chilblains a little ; made with low tops, with red clocks to show they are your fabric,—one of the sweetest knitters in the market.”

With this he fell back quietly in his chair, and reminding Mrs. Lettuce that he should expect his first pair of fall socks Wednesday week, he wished her good day ; which wish Mrs. Lettuce was by no means idle in accepting, for her departure was in fact accomplished with such expedition as to amount almost to a precipitate flight. At this we cannot be greatly astonished, when we consider the chance of a requisition being made upon her to furnish the entire outfit and wardrobe of the broker, by way of lightening his doleful condition and eking out the percentage on his mortgage.

As soon as Mrs. Lettuce had departed, the broker ascended a chair, and after careful inspection of an old chest in his closet, and making discovery of a single pair of fragmentary hose and an old stocking, he said, laughing to himself, “ This merchandize of the old market-woman’s must go into the hands of John Leycraft ; that’s clear. Nights are growing sharper ; a little, a very little wood, must be laid in ; and where fires are kept, socks should be discountenanced.” He had just stepped down from this inquisition, when a sharp rap echoed through the hall, and without wait-

ing for a summons to enter, the strange old body, Puffer Hopkins' friend, marched abruptly into the apartment, with a very peremptory and threatening aspect.

"I have come again!" said the old gentleman, sternly.

"I see you have," replied Mr. Fyler Close, smiling on him with all the suavity and mellowness of an August day.

"Do you see that I am here?" continued Hobbleshank.

"Most assuredly—unless you are an apparition; and then you are here and not here, at the same time," answered the broker.

"If I were a goblin, sir—come in here with a thong of leather to strip you to your skin and stripe you all over with blows—would I be out of place, do you think?"

"Perhaps not much: a little, we'll say a little," answered Mr. Close, still smiling gently on his visiter, "Just to balance the sentence."

"And then if I carried your bruised old carcase," continued Hobbleshank, "and plunged it in a gulf of boiling fire, and held it there by the throat for a century, or so—would it be pleasant and satisfactory?"

"Extremely so," answered the broker; "Nothing could be desired more charming: unless it might be a bond on compound interest, with the interest payable at twelve o'clock, daily."

"That would be finer, you think?"

"Much finer—because that would leave one the use of his legs to get out of troubles with."

"Now, sir," said Hobbleshank, who always made it a point to subject the broker to a searching and playful cross-examination—the answers to which, as has been seen, on the part of the broker, were always extremely candid and confiding, "Now, sir, I want to know of you, whether you think a gentleman who has stood by and seen a man's wife die by inches in the veriest need of common food—has seen the man go mad—yes, mad, sir—with grief, and rush from his house in utter despair and misery—do you think this gentleman, who, when he has put the child and heir of these poor wretches out of the way—God knows how—takes the roof that should have sheltered his boy's head—do you think he deserves the use of his legs? or his cursed griping hands? or his great devilish eyes?"

"Not at all—by no means, my dear sir," answered Fyler Close, blandly. "It would be waste and extravagance to

allow such a monster any thing, but his neck: you know he might hang by that!"

"Suppose you had'nt conveniences to hang him with—no tackle—no scaffold—no murderer's cap," continued Hobbleshank, "and could'nt persuade the gentleman to lend his neck to a noose—what then?"

"What then?—I confess I should be at a stand:—The case stands thus, if I apprehend you, my dear sir," answered Mr. Close, with the same astonishing equanimity. "Here's a great villain to be punished; the law can't reach him, he won't consent to be strung up without law, and declines—is it so?—positively declines to come into any friendly arrangement to be burned or bastinadoed: what's to be done? Upon my honor, my good sir, I must allow the knave has the better of you. I am sorry for it: extremely sorry, but the ways of Providence are just, very just, and I guess you'll have to wait for them."

As Mr. Close uttered these words he assumed a benign and tranquil expression of countenance, and looked serenely forward into empty space, as if it was a hardship, a very great hardship, that such a case should exist, but that it was his duty, as an exemplary citizen, to resign himself to it without a murmur. In this seeming quietude of feeling Hobbleshank scarcely shared.

"What's to be done?" he shouted, darting forward toward the broker. "His ugly flesh is to be torn with sharp nails, like pincers; his head's to be broken, where these maggots hatch—wretch!"

But ere he could fasten upon the broker, and exemplify his notions of punishment, that gentleman, who had been warily watching his visiter all through the interview, dropped from his chair, glided athwart the candle-stand, and throwing himself into the adjoining closet, secured it from within.

Having rehearsed this performance many times before, in previous interviews with his visiter, Mr. Fyler Close achieved it at present with marvellous dispatch. For a few minutes, Hobbleshank made furious assaults upon the broker's fortress, with his feet and clenched fists, which he dashed violently against the panels; all of which proceedings were echoed from within by a hard, iron laugh, that almost set Hobbleshank beside himself. From time to time the laughter continued, and the rage of the old man increased, until at

length, in his extremity of passion, he snatched up the single piece of furniture—the prime ornament of the apartment—dashed it in fragments upon the hearth, kicked open the outer door, and rushed almost headlong into the street.

Mr. Fyler Close had no sooner heard his retreating steps than he quietly unearthed himself, and stepping along the hall of the building, hoisted a window in front, and putting forth his head, watched with considerable interest the form of Hobbleshank as it was whirled along by the rage and desperation of its owner, without much regard to children, fish-mongers—with which the street swarmed—wheelbarrows, or ladies in full dress. He then tranquilly gathered the remains of his writing-table, tied them in a bundle with a string, and placing them tenderly in the corner, produced from an upper shelf of his closet stronghold a single sea-biscuit, and proceeded to his evening meal.

DR. CHANNING.*

ELEVATION of thought united to great intensity and singleness of purpose, are the qualities which render Channing the most eloquent moral writer of the day. At any time, these characteristics would form a man to be listened to and admired by the community; even in the most sensual and self-loving age, the clear voice of such a preacher, sounding above the low pursuits of gain and pleasure, would excite the lives of many by its encouragement to noble aims and a high standard of thought; but especially, the writings of Channing are the exponent of the present, with its vast purposes of benevolence, its plans of action, its labors of improvement, both in the intellectual and physical world, its great task of extending to all those blessings of human life which have heretofore been thought the distinguished privilege of the few. It is only by contemplating men in masses, by fixing the view steadily on a few grand general truths, rising above particulars, that we can properly estimate the

* An Address, delivered before the Mercantile Library Company, of Philadelphia, May 11, 1841. By William E. Channing. Philadelphia: J. Crissy. New York: Wiley & Putnam. 8vo. pp. 45.

influence of such a writer. Judged by the standard of the essayist or the philosophical writer, his works would be at once pronounced deficient; they tell no new discoveries of the nature of man—they analyse no old truths; in acuteness and particularity, in nicety of moral observation, they are not superior to many of the second rate papers in the *Spectator*; but always with more or less of truth, with unfailing constancy, they set forth lofty sentiments and ideas identified with the popular mind and inclination. With no wavering, no scepticism, no irresolute balancing of opinions, they supply the watchword of action. All is hope, encouragement and enthusiasm. We cannot conceive the most prejudiced man of opposite education and way of thinking, listening unmoved to one of his addresses to the people. He may doubt afterwards of its practicability, he may think the doctrines unsafe, but he is compelled to pay homage to the argument and style of the speaker; and no man need be ashamed to be thus carried away, to whatever habits of thinking he may return. Error is not the source of his enthusiasm, but truth, drawn forth from the concealments by which she is hidden in the world, and shown so lovely that all men must worship her. The purity of Channing's morality, coming from an honest heart, its severe aspect of duty, by which the most profligate and careless are attracted, (such is the innate reverence of the heart for virtue,) its proud independence, despising only vice and error, whatever admiration they excite, are worthy of it all. The deepest debt of gratitude one man can owe to another we owe to him who awakens us to the true worth of life, who excites in us ideas of self-sacrifice in the pursuit of duty, who compels us to grasp with energy, for some useful end, those moments which pass away for so many in mere indolence and frivolity. Any fault may be forgotten in a writer if he inspire us with a sense of the reality and value of life. Let there be anything in the world but indifference. The admission of a noble idea into the mind illuminates the whole life; it shows us every relation of our being in a new light, it makes us kind, compassionate, honest to our brother; it "vindicates the ways of God to man." As it vibrates through the soul it raises even the bodily frame. What clearness, what force of mind have we while under its inspiration. How does every thought take its true impression, how harmonious is all in us, how wise, how just,

how benevolent. It is a portion of that faith by which men may remove mountains.

A proof of the value of Channing's writings not to be overlooked, is their copiousness. No vague generalities could, for a quarter of a century, so hold the attention of the public. There must be a strong foothold of truth to stand upon. With comparatively few topics, discussed in simplicity, with a narrow range of illustration, the addresses of Channing fill volumes, with as little repetition as may be found in any class of spoken compositions on any subjects. In his last address, there is the same earnestness communicated to the reader for the welfare of society, the same freshness in the belief of pursuing goodness in the world, that charm us in his early writings.

The aim of this recent address, at Philadelphia, is to illustrate a single feature of the times; what Dr. Channing terms the tendency of the age to Universality. He exhibits this in science, uniting in all its departments, practice to theory; in literature, illustrated by its liberal, benevolent spirit; in religion, by the extension of the means of education, by Sunday School teachers, and the press; in the diffusion of secular education, in the progress of democracy in government, in the growth of free trade, and in the intercourse of nations, by the enlargement of commerce. In truth, in this idea of the extension of human improvement, consists the whole of the much vaunted, much abused doctrine of progress. Society advances—man remains the same. A wise man of this day may be no wiser than a wise man of the age of Socrates; but there may be more wise men in the world now than then. There may be no more poets now, for these are the gift of God, but there are more now who read and understand poetry, and whose lives are governed by its pure lessons. Man can never be perfect in this life, but he may commit fewer acts of injustice in society; he may do much good that he has left undone, and as this good is accomplished, the world is made so much better.

The remainder of the address is occupied with the objections to the restless activity of the times, as a means of social evil and revolt in the state: evils conclusively shown to arise, not from increased toil and labor of the mass, who are spoken against, not from the vices of the poor, but as in the case of the French Revolution, from the fearful luxury and cor-

ruption of the rich and indolent. These are the cankers of the state, not the poor laborious artisan.

The danger to property in the elevation of the laboring classes, is one of the most senseless outcries ever excited by prejudice. If the preservation of social order be all, there is safety enough for that in the interests of the mass, provided the mass once attain an interest worth preserving. The danger is in the wants of the poor, and the weak power of restraint in the hands of the rich. The safest form of government, at this period of the world, is one under which property is most equally divided. The pursuit of wealth is the conservative power of the state. "If we look at the chief direction of the universal activity of the age," says Dr. Channing, "we shall find that it is a conservative one, so as to render social convulsion next to impossible. On what, after all, are the main energies of this restlessness spent? On property, on wealth. High and low, rich and poor, are running the race of accumulation. Property is the prize for which all strain their nerves; and the vast majority compass in some measure this end. And is such a society in danger of convulsion? Is tumult the way to wealth? Is a state of insecurity coveted by men, who own something and hope for more? Are civil laws, which, after all, have property for their chief concern, very likely to be trodden under foot by its worshippers? Of all the dreams of fear, few seem to be more baseless than the dread of anarchy among a people, who are possessed almost to a man with the passion for gain. I am especially amused, when, among such a people, I sometimes hear of danger to property and society, from enthusiastic, romantic reformers, who preach levelling doctrines, equality of wealth, quaker plainness of dress, vegetable food, and community-systems where all are to toil and divide earnings alike. What! Danger from romance and enthusiasm in this money-getting, self-seeking, self-indulging, self-displaying land! I confess, that to me it is a comfort to see some outbreak of enthusiasm, whether transcendental, philanthropic or religious, as a proof that the human spirit is not wholly ingulphed in matter and business, that it can lift up a little the mountains of worldliness and sense with which it is so borne down. It will be time enough to fear, when we shall see fanaticism of any kind stopping ever so little the wheels of business or pleasure, driving ever so little from man's mind the idea of

gain, or from woman's the love of display. Are any of you dreading an innovating enthusiasm? You need only to step into the streets to be assured, that property and the world are standing their ground against the spirit of reform, as stoutly as the most worldly man could desire."

But though this activity is a safeguard, it has its dangers too, not overlooked by the sagacious mind of our author. "The saddest aspect of the age," resumes Dr. Channing in a characteristic passage afterward, which may stand for the sequel to the one we have quoted, and with which we shall leave the present address, "the saddest aspect of the age is that which undoubtedly contributes to social order. It is the absorption of the multitude of men in outward material interests; it is the selfish prudence, which is never tired of the labor of accumulation, and which keeps men steady, regular, respectable drudges from morning to night. The cases of a few murders, great crimes, lead multitudes to exclaim, How wicked this age! But the worst sign is, the chaining down of almost all the minds of a community to low perishable interests. It is a sad thought, that the infinite energies of the soul have no higher end, than to cover the back, and fill the belly, and keep caste in society. A few nerves, hardly visible on the surface of the tongue, create most of the endless stir around us. Undoubtedly, eating and drinking, dressing, house-building and caste-keeping, are matters not to be despised; most of them are essential. But surely life has a higher use, than to adorn this body which is so soon to be wrapt in grave-clothes, than to keep warm and flowing the blood which is so soon to be cold and stagnant in the tomb. I rejoice in the boundless activity of the age, and I expect much of it to be given to our outward wants. But over all this activity, there should preside the great idea of that, which is alone ourselves, of our inward spiritual nature, of the thinking immortal soul, of our supreme good, our chief end, which is to bring out, cultivate and perfect our highest powers, to become wise, holy, disinterested, noble beings, to unite ourselves to God by love and adoration, and to revere his image in his children. The vast activity of this age of which I have spoken, is too much confined to the sensual and material, to gain, and pleasure, and show. Could this activity be swayed and purified by a noble aim, not a single comfort of life would be retrenched,

whilst its beauty and grace and interest would be unspeakably increased."

In a former article* we alluded to the want of personality in Channing's writings, dealing rather with general principles and addressed to masses of man, than meeting the daily wants of the individual in his struggle with daily difficulties and prejudices, though the two cannot be entirely separated. At present it has been our design to do justice to the force with which he urges great moral truths. Channing's eloquence is altogether that of the moralist; he is the orator of the pulpit and the lecture-room. It would be unfair to judge him by the severest literary standards; it were equally unjust to the true standard of literature, to give him praise as an author commensurate with the rank he holds before the public. His books are greatly deficient in the variety of resources we are accustomed to find, for instance, in the writings of Burke. He occupies but a corner of the mind of that thoroughly furnished philosopher. He is wanting in the qualities of Burke's imagination, his naturalness, his grace of mind, his sympathy, his varied accumulations of learning. The best thing that can be said of Channing is, that he appeals to all minds—but he reaches them all but by a single avenue. He does not secure the reluctant consent of the reader to his argument by an intricate passage of wit, or wrap his imprisoned senses in the conviction of a metaphor. He has none of the inventions of the skilful rhetorician, by which a happy style is made to exert its influence over the mind; he is not learned in instances, or refined in argument; but he has that without which these talents are of no avail: a cause that carries with it its own witnesses in the lives of all. His subject is human right—his only aid the silent voice of duty in the breast of each. Before a popular uncultivated audience, the directness and confidence of his declamation may often succeed better by the very absence of these high qualities. In fine, Channing is a memorable example of the success of diligent perseverance aiming at a lofty end.

D.

*Arcturus, Vol. I., page 124.

A SUMMER MEDITATION.

ONE MORNING of the last month—the first of summer—on a day that invited by its fragrance and purity, we found ourselves, almost unconsciously, pursuing the walks at Hoboken, marking with delight the trim avenues at our feet, leading away with patches of broken shade and sunshine, beneath curved and twisted branches, into far ideal fields of heavenly splendor. The union of order and design with the careless beauties of nature, provokes, at such seasons, in the minds of the contemplative, a harmony and regularity of thought better than the wild mirth and extravagance of more boisterous enjoyment. The man who has followed nature through all her haunts of grandeur and beauty, may, at his travels' end, return to a calmer and wiser pleasure among the simple avenues of a garden. Love nature as we may, the true man will ever seek for some resemblance, some hint of human kind, something in these better moments to love and cherish.

Verily, for one with a heart for his fellow man and nature, there can be no better enjoyment than, in a state of good physical digestion, to walk these hills, courted by the old gods and goddesses of the wood in every rustling branch, and the play of sunshine upon the leaves, like glancing fountains, while the mighty, solemn river in its restless course, flows by the more restless life in the gray city rising beyond. Truly, there are no wreathed statues or altars here to the god Pan, or the goddess Pomona, but the trees verdant and luxuriant, and the brown soil, and the flowers, and birds, and intermingled sunlight remain, that lived before the statues were invented; that taught men their use, that survive them in eternal nature. Flora is here on this American soil, and Diana, with her honorable court of maidens, sports in the groves, though there be no ceremonies to their praise; the idea that gave them all their worth exists in the breast yet. If we do not worship them even now, we would have been but poor spectators on the soil of Attica. We may enjoy, too, the traditionary wealth of other days, and assemble the fays and fairies of the middle age as well; for the heart has no fear of anachronism, and can harmonize them all, by one kindred touch of sympathy.

From such a stately height as this, Milton drew, in vision,
his picture of Athens:—

Behold
Where on the Ægean shore a city stands
Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil :
Athens, the eye of Greece.

Listen, and you may hear the vexed cry of human life
struggling in the modern city of gain, borne across the
water ; a ceaseless monotone to the varied voices of nature.
Will there be no morning carols ever for the sons of men—
no mid-day rest, or evening lullabies ? Let philanthropists
walk over these fields, and learn a lesson from the wisdom
of nature. Still rises the complaint of the city, like the
heavy breathing of some huge leviathan floating on the
waters.

The great humanity which beats
Its life along the stony streets,
Like a strong unsunned river
In a self-made course, is ever
Rolling on ! Rolling on !
I sit and hear it as it rolls,
That flow of souls !

The infinite tendencies,
In the finite, chafed and pent,—
In the finite, turbulent !

The long drear monotone,
Made of many tones that rise
Each to each as contraries !—

The rich man's ambling steeds—
Lolling their necks as the chariot comes
With its inward gleam of the eddying plumes !—

The poor man's abject needs—
The feet that wearily, wearily roam,
Unquickened by thoughts of the fire at home—
The cry of the babe unheard of its mother,
Though it lie on her breast, while she thinks of the other
Laid yesterday in tomb !

The whine of voices that have made
Their own grief's sacredness a trade—
The curse that ringeth hollowly,
The crime against the misery—
The haggling talk—the organ's grinding—
The grinder's face being o'er it leant,
Most vacant even of woe,—
While the children's hearts leap so
At the merry music's winding !—

The rapid pace of the business-men
 Whose eyes do glitter cold,
 As still they saw the gold—
 The funeral's long slow train
 Plumed black, beside
 Many a house where the rioters laugh
 And count the beakers they shall quaff
 At the morrow's festivals—
 Many a house where sits a bride
 Trying the morrow's coronals,
 With a red blush, ev'n to-day!
 Slowly creep the funerals,—
 As none should hear the noise and say,
 The living, the living, must go away
 To multiply the dead! *

Nature to-day, in her cheerfulness and grace, mocks at these grave thoughts; the perfect and glossy form of the poor worm at my feet, knows nothing of infirmity; the whisper of the grass, and the careless notes of the birds, have nothing of fear or the future. It is wise to surrender oneself to unreflecting nature, and mark her beauties with all the voluptuousness of fancy we can command. No gold-tipped staff of office, no jewel in the ear of girlhood were ever more worshipful, than that little wren just alighted on the end of a tapering branch with the effort of his song just swaying the tender spray.

Afar are the pictured hills of the Hudson, lying in broad masses of shade in the uppermost view, and close at the left is the picturesque fine old country residence, crowned with honeysuckle, and surrounded by a set of bulbous, hard-limbed, ancestral trees, the family retainers at Castle Point. Near one of the piazzas is a remarkable old tree, the bark corrugated with warts and pimples, and swollen out of all reasonable proportions, like the puffed landlord Pantagruel met in his travels, who had been cut and slashed in his body like a taffeta doublet to make way for the flesh.† The portentous knobs and bubucles on its surface beget the idea, supported by its neighborly position to the mansion, that it has derived its chief nourishment from the wine-cellar.

* Poems of Miss Elizabeth B. Barrett.

† The humorous account of the last moments of this individual, we recommend to our readers as a companion-piece to the death of Wouter Van Twiller, in Knickerbocker's New-York. It occurs in Rabelais, Bk. v., Ch. xvii.

It reads an eminent lesson in behalf of temperance, and we pray may have its effect with the visitors to the "bar" at the Elysian Fields.

There is but one human being in sight—a young amateur, imbedded in thick grass, studying what appears to be a circulating library twelvemo. Doubtless it is a poet, or a good novel, which is the same. His presence has led away our thoughts in a new direction, for there is so much that appeals in his sensible dress and manner, that we feel it wrong to be silent. A few words spoken at this time might influence the lives of both us for good through years to come. The best friendships have been formed in this accidental way; but while we remain silent all does not perish. Men who ought to be friends are thus often separated by so little an interval,—yet though much is thus lost, much also is rendered in silence unsuspected. Nature may teach us something here: the good she renders is silent and secret, unknown to herself whether any ear listens to her ceaseless harmony, or any eye sees her miracles of beauty. Unconsciously, too, may man in many ways benefit his fellow men, without speech, acquaintanceship or personal friendship. In building a fine house on an eminent place, especially in writing and publication, by grace and refinement of dress and manner. Therefore all should be careful of outward propriety and decency, nay somewhat of mere elegance, for so the world receives much innocent pleasure. How much society owes to the sights of beauty in man or woman—beauty, the symbol of divine harmony, the mirror of heaven, a curse of envy to the uncharitable, the morose and the cynical, a blessing to the pure-hearted, its enjoyment the best reward of a simple virtuous life, of the cultivation of the heart and the affections.

D.

ON PREACHING.*

AN irreligious, profane clergyman, does but declaim when he preaches.
—LABRUYERE.

I SEE no reason that so high a princess as Divinity is, should be presented to the people in the sordid rags of the tongue ; nor that he, which speaks from the Father of Languages, should deliver his embassy in an ill one.—OWEN FELLTHAM.

PREACHING is the expression of the moral sentiment in application to the duties of life.—R. W. EMERSON.

WHEN we consider the frequency of the occasion, the nobleness of the topics, their supreme importance, the efficacy of the act well performed, the genius requisite, the variety of congregations, the number of preachers, we are at a complete stand to account for the deplorably low state of preaching. This confession, extorted from us by the facts of the case, may afford matter of astonishment to many, who are very well satisfied with the present state of the pulpit—who ask for nothing better—who, perhaps, could not comprehend anything superior. We have always been well pleased at the recollection of that passage in the *Spectator*, where Sir Roger de Coverly's parish clergyman being asked who was to preach on the next Sunday for him, replied, Doctor South in the morning, and Doctor Barrow in the afternoon; meaning, that he intended reading a sermon from those great divines on both occasions. We heartily wish some of the divines of this day would have the courage, as well as the good sense, to adopt a similar practice at suitable opportunities. In points of essential merit, no critic, any way qualified, would hesitate to give the preference to one of South's best sermons over a majority of modern dis-

* Without pledging ourselves, in all cases, to the sayings of contributors, we are yet anxious, for the sake of liberty of opinion, to extend as little as possible the class of prohibited subjects. The pulpit we do not think one of them. The voice of an intelligent laity—hitherto too much neglected in the affairs of the church—should be entertained and heeded ; its exercise, within due limits, with proper intelligence, would soon elevate and sustain the pulpit in its just position—the most desirable station for the best minds. As it is, the pulpit is not generally equal to the bar in manliness, energy and talent.—EDS. ARCTURUS.

courses, even by divines of considerable eminence. What pithiness of sense and point of expression in the old divines ! what weakness, flaccidity, baldness in the present race ! If the excessive length of Barrow, or the local satire of South, or the extravagant erudition and overflowing fancy of Taylor, be excepted to, let Barrow be condensed, expunge South, and prune the excrescences of the Bishop of Down and Connor. Taste, no mean talents, judgment, are requisite for this selection and purgation, and only to the hands of a first rate man, would we consign the task. Inferior intellects, if admitted on the plea of piety into the church at all, should not pretend to this, but take the best sermons as they find them. It is not for them to abuse and dislocate the fine thoughts of genius, which learning may have overloaded or temporary allusions rendered quaint and obscure. It is almost presumption in a man of equal genius, to try his skill on the same subjects that have engaged the attention of those master intellects ; for Cowley to attempt a flight with the Theban eagle. It is absolute profanation for a petty parson to endeavor to hurl the thunders of Avenging Justice, or to imitate the silver eloquence of an Angel of Mercy.

From the practice of reading the best published sermons of standard and orthodox divines, two good results, if no more, would follow ; the art of elocution would be much more attended to, and the sermons could be studied and carefully meditated, by which means, the preacher might deliver it with greater effect. We suspect that many a minister would then understand his theme better than now, that he is obliged to write so frequently, and at such comparatively short notice.

To this practice, the majority of congregations might demur—so strong is the hold of ancient usage upon men's minds. The curse of political, seems to be the predominant vice of religious corporations ; viz. a blindness to innovation—even when wholesome—to reform ; a prejudice in favor of existing practises. Many good people appear to suspect indolence or indifference on the part of a preacher who reads a printed sermon. They call it an imposition. They must have a return for the salary. But, is a meagre discourse from your parson as well worth your attention, as a sermon from the lips of the English Chrysostoms and Austins ? As it is, are they all original preachers who deliver written sermons ? a sermon may be transferred as well as any thing else. There are other “conveyances”

beside those of a legal description. The very critics who speak so authoritatively, are not always acquainted with the sources of the finest thoughts and most sparkling fancies. When they abuse the preacher's tediousness, they may be reflecting upon Tillotson; and when pleased with a graceful expression they may be only assenting to the sentiment of Sherlock or Aterbury.

The defects of contemporary preaching, are twofold: literary and religious. We must premise two considerations before entering upon these points of criticism. Preaching is too *general* to have any special efficacy. It is directed against vice and sin in the abstract; it enforces virtue and goodness in the general. It recognises passions and sentiments, rather than a separate act or an individual feeling. It wants particularity.—The preacher addresses his congregation, rather than any single member of it. Perhaps there is no speciality in his ideas; he may, himself, entertain only general impressions of the beauty of holiness, or the heinousness of crime. His own soul may not be truly alive to the convictions of his reason; his own spirit may not be wholly imbued with his own doctrines. As a matter of course, he can produce no impression, who feels no strong motive for exciting any.

Preaching is also too frequent. It is made too common. In the early history of the church, priests, or at least one class of them, were allowed to preach only at stated times; some, if we are not mistaken, not oftener than once a month. This, too, at a time when preaching, as a means of making proselytes, was much more essential to the growth of the church than at present.

The true intent of preaching, the object of a sermon, it seems to us, is not comprehended. We are impressed with the truth, that a preacher should teach rather than declaim; convince than speculate; persuade and exhort, and not merely amuse or entertain. His business is to teach men doctrine and duty; but, of the two, duty rather than doctrine, as practice is more important than opinion. He must be himself sincere, if he would gain influence; and of his sincerity, a good life is the only test. He must speak from experience who would speak with authority. The mere orator in the pulpit is contemptible. What audacity to play off rhetorical tricks before high heaven, for the admiration of a gaping crowd. At the same time, severely as

we repudiate hollow display, even of the finest genius, we yet hold the noblest exercise of the faculties to be, the worship and adoration of the Almighty Father. To his service should the richest genius, the costliest research, the most accomplished talents, be dedicated: yet with humility, and all in his honor. But what is to be taught? Everything—both Physical Science and the Belles Lettres: and the first of these may be often introduced by way of illustration of natural theology; and the last, for ornament. History must be included, for she records deeds and characters by way of example; politics, for government is based on religion; morality, for that is the practical exponent of Christianity. Nothing is too high for the sacred chair, that refers to nature; nothing too low, that is connected with humanity. Religion, a matter of universal concern, includes everything else; whatever is to be known, can be felt, or ought to be done. The pulpit should be the school, the lecture room, the press, for the people. How many glean all their scanty stock from the preacher. Many take all their religious and moral views from their clergyman. This alone should incline us to fix the standard of preaching high; to make it very comprehensive.

Of all the varieties of preaching, we place the moral discourse at the head; that which impresses our highest duties, and directs our familiar offices; that which regards man as a social creature, as well as a spiritual being; that which, in its zeal for heavenly things, does not overlook the period spent here on this bank and shoal of time! Such preaching is *Christian*, for it is after the model of the Sermon on the Mount—that compend of Christian duties and doctrine. Much idle cant has been expended on a distinction between evangelical and moral sermons; as if a good moralist was not, from the philosophical nature of the case, religious. Not that morality is better than religion. It is as good. It is the same with it. It is Christianity applied to action. Christianity is, in a word, a divine morality. The law of God and the moral law coincide, are contemporary. Morality is not only as old as the creation, but existed long before it—before all time—in the bosom of the Supreme Being. An awful sense of duty governs all beneath the Creator of the world, down to the meanest of his intelligent and responsible creatures. This, we would have preached. The most sterling of the old divines afford abundant precedents.

The sermons of Barrow, in particular, are almost entirely moral treatises. Tillotson founds revelation on the law of nature; and speaks of the latter as antecedent to the former.

Evangelical piety, often pure and sincere, has as often been assumed by those, who, disregarding the common rules of morality, expect from their very wickedness, to shine out as brilliant lights;—"the greater sinner, the greater saint." Is it harsh to suspect such repentance half the time? About strict morality, there can be less mistake. It affords ground for fewer deceptions.

There is another vulgar (though time-honored) error, regarding the personal character of the priest, which would teach us a bad man may still be a good priest; that the office sanctifies the clerical acts of the incumbent. This cannot be so. It is too revolting to common reason, let the sophisms of controversialists be marshalled as they may. For our own part, (and we think we share the feeling with many), we cannot hear the sermon of a preacher, let him be ever so eloquent or acute, if we do not reverence his personal character. The two are inseparable—and of the two, the man should predominate. When the man is good and the priest perfect in his function, then we find the true character. The formalist and the hypocrite sometimes usurp his place, and in passing we will glance at each. The formalist in the pulpit, is as injurious to the cause of religion, as the sceptic in company; perhaps more hurtful, because with less art and without an armed design. The one disgusts the man of sense and sincere christian: the other, by specious logic alarms the wary and puts his opponents on their guard. We find a passage in Mr. Emerson's Divinity Address, so germane to the matter, that we cannot forbear quoting it.

"Whenever the pulpit is usurped by a formalist, then is the worshipper defrauded and disconsolate. We shrink as soon as the prayers begin, which do not uplift, but smite and offend us. We are fain to wrap our cloaks about us, and secure, as best we can, a solitude that hears not. I once heard a preacher who sorely tempted me to say, I would go to church no more. Men go, thought I, where they are wont to go, else had no soul entered the temple in the afternoon. A snowstorm was falling around us. The snowstorm was real; the preacher merely spectral; and the eye felt the sad contrast in looking at him, and then out of the window be-

hind him, into the beautiful meteor of the snow. He had lived in vain. He had not one word intimating that he had laughed or wept, was married or in love, had been commended, or cheated, or chagrined. If he had ever lived and acted we were none the wiser for it. The capital secret of his profession, namely, to convert life into truth, he had not learned. Not one fact in all his experience, had he yet imported into his doctrine. This man had ploughed, and planted, and talked, and bought, and sold; he had read books; he had eaten and drunken; his head aches; his heart throbs; he smiles and suffers; yet was there not a surmise, a hint, in all the discourse, that he had ever lived at all. Not a line did he draw out of real history. The true preacher can always be known by this, that he deals out to the people his life,—life passed through the fire of thought. But of the bad preacher, it could not be told from his sermon, what age of the world he fell in; whether he had a father or a child; whether he was a freeholder or a pauper; whether he was a citizen or a countryman; or any other fact of his biography."

The hypocrite is much worse, and, next to the man of cold malicious heart, the worst man in the world. Cant, always despicable, in the pulpit is blasphemy. Yet, there is a cant (if we are not wrong) without hypocrisy; a professional style of speech, an assumption of using common words in a particular and pedantic sense. Such is the phrase, "professing" christian, a puritanical expression, that has become quite common; a presumptuous term, vainglorious, pharisaical. The character of the good parson is far removed from either of these.

The style of sermons cannot be too plain and simple, in general. The best, is perfectly clear and earnest. Strength and seriousness are the great qualities. Let it be rather a labored plainness than a labored eloquence. The greatest truths, like the richest gems, show best plain set. The best character, for a writer of sermons, is Ben Jonson's character of Cartwright the dramatist, also a preacher. "He, my son Cartwright, writes all like a man." Joined to this manly sense, let there be a liberal spirit of humanity; a sympathy with men, as men; compassion and fellow feeling. Let suavity modify the rigour of doctrines, and let a Christian feeling breathe over your whole spirit. Thus we would address the preacher.

Action and gesture, when natural, are always right—when artificial, very seldom.—To the young preacher, we would further say, the old divines afford a good school, but a knowledge of human nature is better. Still, of the old divines drink your fill—of wisdom, and fancy, and piety, and acute knowledge, and ability of every kind. What pictures, and fair conceits, and rich harmonies, in Taylor! what ingenious thoughts, so fine, so delicate, in Donne! what massy arguments, and ample discussions, in Barrow! what sharpness, what force, what satire, in South! what liberality and fairness, in Tillotson! what closeness and accuracy, in Clarke! And he that reads the great contemporaries of these great men, will find them to have “written with a crisped pen.”

J.

THE MATERIALS OF HISTORY.

INDIFFERENCE to the past, considered as a national characteristic, is a mark of rudeness and incivilization. A purely savage people live only in the present moment. The satisfaction of immediate wants, the enjoyment of the passing hour, make up the sum total of their existence. They have no monuments, and they leave none. To them, the deeds of forefathers, the exploits of other times, the good or the evil that marked an earlier day, afford no examples and impart no instruction. It is as if none had lived before them, and none were to come after. Equally indifferent to the future, they make no provision for a day beyond that which already dawns upon them, and care as little for the next generation as the last.

Such are mankind in their natural and uncultivated state. But as they emerge into the light of civilization, a change comes over the scene. An enlarged horizon exhibits new objects to the view. Their gaze is no longer fixed, animal-like, upon the narrow compass of earth that suffices for present indulgence; but looking upward towards Heaven, and around upon the out-spreading landscape, they begin to feel the sublimity of their intellectual nature, and to call into exercise the faculties that God has endowed them with, but of which they have hitherto remained unconscious. Now awa-

kens the thirst of knowledge—the strong and insatiable desire to grasp at something beyond mere sensation. The well-spring of thought bubbles up, fertilizing and stimulating the perceptions, and a thousand imaginations and conceits pour forth in undisciplined confusion. Reason and reflection soon, however, assert their rights, and the plastic hand of cultivation moulds all into shape and order.

The present moment is now no longer the limit of the mind's ken. It supplies too gross a material for the exercise of the awakened powers, and the imagination scorns to feed upon it. Stretching back to the past, or diving deep into futurity, it delights to take to itself the wings of fancy, and revel and riot amid the scenes that lure it away from the sensualities and follies, the cares and distractions, of the fleeting moment. It conjures up the realities of a by-gone age, and seeks to learn the motives, the principles, the habits both of mind and body, and all that was comprised in the career of those who once lived and flourished, but have long slumbered in the Valley of Silence. At this stage of progress the father of history unfolded his luminous page, and recited to his assembled countrymen the glorious deeds and chivalric achievements of their departed sires, or traced the daring exploits of the half-fabulous heroes, who made Greece the arena for the display of super-human courage and unrivalled prowess. It is needless to add that the land rung with the praises of the man, who had thus successfully appealed both to the new-born thirst for historic lore, and to that other scarcely less civilized sentiment, the love of one's own country.

Advancing improvement strengthens the desire to converse with departed excellence, and national pride leads to the erection of lasting monuments to perpetuate its fame. Memorials are sought on every hand; but, alas! it too often happens that inattention or neglect on the part of contemporaries, occasions the loss of what a subsequent age would be sure to prize, as the precious reliques of genius or distinguished merit. How little is known, for instance, of the private history of England's great dramatist, and with what eagerness are the faintest traces of his every-day life sought and treasured up! Yet with a little care exercised either in his own day or by those of the succeeding generation, enough might have been gathered to enable his admirers in all ages to form a correct conception of the life and personal

character of the man, whose genius is the proudest boast of English literature. Great national events likewise often fail of a proper appreciation, from the want of due care in preserving the memorials of their occurrence. To the historical student, many cases in point will suggest themselves. The history of American discovery may be mentioned, as singularly deficient in the requisite materials for its elucidation. The important voyages of Sebastian Cabot and Amerigo Vespucci are involved in much obscurity, and the chart or map drawn by the former to illustrate his discoveries, has long been classed among the things "lost on earth." Navarrete is doing much in Spain to rescue from oblivion the services rendered by his countrymen in the discovery of the new world; but had the work in which he is engaged been earlier begun, the results would have been far more satisfactory and complete.

In this country, little has been yet accomplished towards preserving the materials of history. The federal government has shown great attention in preserving its own records, and a highly important work is in progress under its patronage, which, if completed according to the plan of its industrious and intelligent projector, will constitute the greatest repository of historical documents extant.* Something has been done by individual states, but with a few exceptions their publications have been confined to legislative journals and documents. Massachusetts has done more: she has recently published the laws of the old Plymouth Colony, and the journals of her Provincial Congress during a part of the Revolutionary War; and for several years a highly competent person has been employed in arranging the great mass of public papers belonging to her archives. Our own State is not without claims to respectful consideration in regard to this subject. Besides an almost uninterrupted printed series of legislative journals, for a period of a century and a half, twenty-six volumes of the early Dutch records have been translated at the expense of the State, (during the administration of De Witt Clinton), and an agent has been lately sent to Europe for the purpose of collecting materials illustrative of our colonial history. At the last session of the legislature, a resolution was adopted with great unanim-

*The Documentary History of the United States, by Peter Force.

ity in both branches, authorizing the Governor to procure the printing of the journals of the New-York Provincial Congress and the Committee of Safety, from 1775 to 1777, including the journal of the Convention for framing the first State Constitution. Georgia has likewise acted with a commendable spirit in relation to her colonial history. In 1824 her general assembly made an appropriation "for the purpose of collecting, arranging and publishing, all papers relating to the original settlement or political history of the State, now in the Executive or Secretary of State's office." More recently, by virtue of a resolution of the legislature passed December 23d, 1837, the Governor appointed the Rev. Charles Wallace Howard an agent of the State, "to repair to London for the purpose of procuring the colonial records, or copies thereof, now in the colonial department of Great Britain, that relate to the history and settlement of this State." The result of this mission was, twenty-two large folio volumes of public documents, averaging over two hundred closely written pages each.

Historical associations form, without doubt, the most important auxiliary for the promotion of the same object. Massachusetts enjoys the honor of having set the example, in establishing a society for this purpose, which was organized as early as the year 1791; it has since published about thirty volumes of Collections, all of which abound in valuable historical materials. The New York Society was the next institution of the kind, and dates from the year 1804. It has published six volumes, and collected a library of American history almost without a rival in this country. Among its early friends and active members were, De Witt Clinton, Gov. Tompkins, Dr. Mitchell, Judge Benson, and others of the most eminent men of their day. In New Hampshire a society was formed in 1822, which has also published several volumes. Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Georgia, Connecticut and Virginia, have also their historical associations, occupied for the most part in the collection of materials relative to the history of their respective States.

In this connexion may be noticed the enterprise of Alexandre Vattemare, whose plan of promoting an interchange of duplicate productions in science, literature and the arts, among institutions in various parts of the world, is well calculated to favor the collection of historical materials. Having visited the different capitals of Europe, and explored

their libraries, cabinets and museums, he often discovered, in the progress of his researches, works of the utmost importance to the historical collections of one country, preserved in another where they were of much less value and interest. And wherever he went, he met with relics of inestimable value for the illustration of the early stages of European society, the existence of which was scarcely known, owing to the little care bestowed in preserving the memorials of departed times. The plan of instituting a general system of exchanges throughout the civilized world, cannot fail to awaken a general attention to this subject and lead to a better appreciation of the antique and historical treasures possessed by different countries, while the proposed interchange of duplicates, if carried into effect, must add greatly to the value of their respective collections.

It rejoices us to see this subject gaining friends and acquiring interest in the public mind. We are, indeed, a youthful community, and it was unreasonable, not to say absurd, in Monsieur Vattermare, to expect to find among us "vast public libraries, splendid museums, and institutions of all kinds, which should far outstrip even the most munificent establishments of the old world*;" but we have a history worth preserving, and something may be done with the most limited means in amassing the materials that should enter into its composition. Our libraries and public collections may be enlarged; the exertions of zealous individuals, who are willing to devote their time to the promotion of these objects, should be encouraged; and by and by, in due course of time, our deficiencies in these matters may not be so glaring as to excite the especial wonder and amazement of intelligent persons from the other side of the water.

G. F.

* See the report of his remarks on a late occasion, in the *New-Yorker*.

LORD BOLINGBROKE.*

THE REPUTATION of Bolingbroke is now almost wholly a matter of tradition. The courted and caressed minion of fortune, the "all-accomplished St. John," the petted darling of fashion, the favorite son of genius, is, at the present day, a name and little else. The personal qualities of a brilliant manner and polished address, which, together with copiousness of language, both in writing and speaking, a certain elegance of air, and a superficial stock of showy erudition, conspired to render the name of Bolingbroke, a talisman of magic power in his own day, have all now given place to an oblivion, rightly merited, by an absence of the chief virtues of the heart, and of all the really admirable qualities of the head—the only sure antidotes to mortality. We find in the history of Bolingbroke, a lesson to those who would elevate the character of a friend into that of a demigod; who judge too much from personal feeling, and make little allowance for the just, because utterly impartial, verdict of posterity.

If we gather our opinion of the genius of Bolingbroke from the reports of private friendship, we would place him on the pinnacle of fame; if we judge from his personal history, and from his own writings, we come to a quite opposite conclusion. The writers of his day seemed to have conspired to raise him to the heights of renown; but he had not the internal force to make good their endeavors. Resting on his own merits, he soon sank to his proper level of inferiority, and general obscurity.

The praises bestowed on Bolingbroke fall little short of adulation. Pope's strain is always that of extravagant eulogium. Swift was not far behind in this respect. Later writers have kept up the ball. Bulwer, and the younger D'Israeli, in their early novels, painted him the hero of the boudoir and the saloon of fashion. The latest professed eulogy we have read of Bolingbroke, is from the pen of Lord Mahon, in his history—who coincides with the vulgar

* The Works of Lord Bolingbroke; with a life, prepared expressly for this edition; containing additional information relative to his personal and public character, selected from the best authorities. In 4 vols. 8vo. Philadelphia: Carey and Hart. 1841.

idea of a past school of criticism, in the opinion, that Bolingbroke was, perhaps, the finest of English writers.

Writing chiefly either on political, and hence purely ephemeral topics, or on moral and religious, and hence permanent themes, Bolingbroke is to be judged as a pamphleteer, and as a philosopher. In the first character, he was eminently successful; his tenets were those of a strong partizan, and defended with animation and considerable force of declamation. Sometimes, he rose into eloquence; but generally, his declamation was as cold and artificial as his reasoning was specious and shallow. Pitt, to be sure, used to say, the Letter to Sir William Wyndham was the most masterly composition in the English language, but his wretched literary taste is well known. It suited his own style of political eloquence: being wordy, full and musical. The moral essays of Bolingbroke, are equally worthless for the thought and the style. Some of his religious speculations, were close on the verge of atheism; he adopted the French cant of freedom from prejudice, and denied the genuineness of certain parts of the Bible. His platonic aspirations have the appearance of utter insincerity; and his mouthing rants about patriotism and public good, can deceive only the most credulous of his readers. In a word, we look on Bolingbroke as a literary charlatan; and concur entirely with Blair—who, for once, forgot his formality and indifference, when he told his pupils, that for profit, no English writer could be read with such little advantage as Bolingbroke. His style, however meretricious, has the merit of copiousness and harmony. In music, we consider it unrivalled; but that is the least part of good writing. A few sentences, taken at random, from the Letters on the Study of History, may serve to display this beauty to advantage.

“I had rather take the Darius whom Alexander conquered, for the son of Hystaspes, and make as many anachronisms as a Jewish chronologer, than sacrifice half my life to collect all the learned lumber that fills the head of an antiquary. . . . * * * The school of example, my lord, is the world, and the masters of this school are history and experience. I am far from contending that the former is preferable to the latter; I think upon the whole otherwise: but this I say, that the former is absolutely necessary to prepare us for the latter, and to accompany us whilst we are under

the discipline of the latter ; that is, through the whole course of our lives. No doubt some few men may be quoted, to whom nature gave what art and industry can give to no man. But such examples will prove nothing against me, because I admit that the study of history, without experience, is insufficient ; but assert, that experience itself is so without genius. Genius is preferable to the other two, but I would wish to find the three together ; for how great soever a genius may be, and how much soever he may acquire new light and heat, as he proceeds in his rapid course, certain it is that he will never shine with the full lustre, nor shed the full influence he is capable of, unless to his own experience he adds the experience of other men and other ages. Genius, without the improvement, at least, of experience, is what comets once were thought to be ; a blazing meteor, irregular in his course, and dangerous in his approach ; of no use to any system, and able to destroy any. Mere sons of earth, if they have experience without any knowledge of the history of the world, are but half scholars in the science of mankind ; and if they are conversant in history without experience, they are worse than ignorant ; they are pedants, always incapable, sometimes meddling and presuming. The man who has all three, is an honor to his country, and a public blessing ; and such, I trust, your lordship will be in this century, as your great grandfather was in the last.

* * * * Now if all this be so ; if reason has so little, and ignorance, passion, interest, and custom so much to do, in forming our opinions and our habits, and in directing the whole conduct of human life ; is it not a thing desirable by every thinking man, to have the opportunity, indulged to so few by the course of accidents, the opportunity '*secum esse, et secum vivere*,' of living some years at least to ourselves and for ourselves, in a state of freedom, under the laws of reason, instead of passing our whole time in a state of vassalage under those of authority and custom ? Is it not worth our while to contemplate ourselves and others, and all the things of this world, once before we leave them, through the medium of pure, and, if I may say so, of undefiled reason ? Is it not worth our while to approve or condemn, on our own authority, what we receive in the beginning of life on the authority of other men, who were not then better able to judge for us than we are now to judge for ourselves. * * * To set about acquiring the

habits of meditation and study late in life, is like getting into a go-cart with a grey beard, and learning to walk when we have lost the use of our legs. In general, the foundations of an happy old age, must be laid in youth; and in particular, he who has not cultivated his reason young, will be utterly unable to improve it old. *Manent ingenia senibus, modo permaneant studium et industria.* * * * Your lordship may think this perhaps a little too sanguine, for one who has lost so much time already: you may put me in mind, that human life has no second spring, no second summer: you may ask me what I mean by sowing in autumn, and whether I hope to reap in winter? My answer will be, that I think very differently from most men, of the time we have to pass and the business we have to do in this world: I think we have more of one, and less of the other, than is commonly supposed. Our want of time, and the shortness of human life, are some of the principal common-place complaints, which we prefer against the established order of things: they are the grumblings of the vulgar, and the pathetic lamentations of the philosopher; but they are impertinent and impious in both. The man of business despises the man of pleasure for squandering his time away; the man of pleasure pities or laughs at the man of business, for the same thing; and yet both concur superciliously and absurdly to find fault with the Supreme Being, for having given them so little time. The philosopher, who mis spends it very often as much as the others, joins in the same cry, and authorizes this impiety. Theophrastus thought it extremely hard to die at ninety, and to go out of the world when he had just learned how to live in it;—his master, Aristotle, found fault with nature for treating man in this respect worse than several other animals: both very unphilosophically! and I love Seneca the better, for his quarrel with the Stagyrite on this head. * * * * That life which seems to our self-love so short, when we compare it with the ideas we frame of eternity, or even with the duration of some other beings, will appear sufficient, upon a less partial view, to all the ends of our creation, and of a just proportion in the successive course of generations. The term itself is long: we render it short; and the want we complain of, flows from our profusion, not from our poverty. We are all arrant spendthrifts: some of us dissipate our estates on the trifles, some on the superfluities, and then we

all complain that we want the necessaries of life. The much greatest part never reclaim, but die bankrupts to God and man; others reclaim late; and they are apt to imagine, when they make up their accounts and see how their fund is diminished, that they have not enough remaining to live upon, because they have not the whole. But they deceive themselves: they were richer than they thought, and they are not yet poor: if they husband well the remainder, it will be found sufficient for all the necessaries, and for some of the superfluities, and trifles too, perhaps, of life: but then the former order of expense must be inverted; and the necessaries of life must be provided, before they put themselves to any cost for the trifles or superfluities."

In the best passages, we are sometimes reminded of Cowley and Sir William Temple, among his predecessors; and in the present day, we see a revival of the same power of amplification in a nobler spirit, in the works of Channing and Macaulay.

As an orator, Bolingbroke was rated very high by his contemporaries. His successors in public life, (Pitt and Brougham), have estimated him the very first of English orators. Lord Chesterfield thought him superior to the ancients. But, in his printed works, he is infinitely beneath Burke—who, singularly enough, commenced his career by an imitation of Bolingbroke—which proved superior to the original. We can imagine him, however, a very popular speaker. He had all the arts of oratory, and a fine person. He was quick, brilliant, energetic, fiery; his manners, soft, elegant, refined; his scholarship, dazzling and deceptive. He was also, when necessary, untiring in business; and, perhaps, the best negotiator and diplomat, among the English statesmen of his time.

The personal character of this "brilliant knave" was, in early life, grossly sensual;—he was a sort of Marquis of Waterford: only rivalling him in reckless licentiousness. He kept the most expensive mistress in the kingdom, and boasted of being able to drink more than any other man could bear. He once ran a race naked through Hyde Park. Lord Byron was quite a puritan compared with Bolingbroke. His lordship's ambition, when a collegian, and until the age of near thirty, was wholly of the puerile sort that distinguishes rich young men of fashion of the present day.

As he advanced towards maturity, he became the statesman and political leader. After the loss of power and influence, he turned philosopher. It may look like want of charity, but we confess we suspect it to be too true, that philosophy was the last resort of Bolingbroke; as politics has been said to be "the last resort of a scoundrel." And it is astonishing, how men are allowed to conduct the affairs of the nation, whose private business is entirely neglected, and whose personal character is highly valued, at the very smallest premium.

Religion, Bolingbroke repelled with disdain; but rested firm in the consolations of philosophy. He died at an advanced age, and holding the same doctrines to the very last.

There must have been in the company and private character of this celebrated man, more than appears in his writings and public conduct, else how were the best men of his time so duped by his fascinating qualities. The stern sense of Swift, the acute satire of Pope, the comic subtlety of Gay, had pierced the hollow surface of pretence, and lashed the age; yet they united in one chorus of applause to the genius, the patriotism, the purity of Bolingbroke! It is a curious problem.

We cannot close this slight notice, without paying a tribute of just compliment to the enterprising publishers. The work is printed with great neatness; the portrait admirably engraved. It is a cause of regret with us, that the subject matter, at this time, is not more worthy of the execution. How many far superior works lie mouldering in the rubbish of ancient libraries. St. John may be popular at the south. He inculcates a lax morality; and the style may suit the Virginia idea of eloquence—frothy and high sounding. But here, in these middle states, and at the east, we know better what true eloquence and sound philosophy mean, and have living models of both.

The editor deserves some notice, but wholly by way of censure. In a pert, pragmatistical preface, he speaks slightly of the elegant compilation of Goldsmith, who has sifted the facts cleanly, and given the gist of the matter. It is a common criticism to speak of the indolence of Goldsmith, who, however, left a goodly number of volumes behind him, and wrote as no other man of his day could write. A similar vulgar error prevails with regard to Irving, (our Goldsmith), who has written his shelf full of choice classics.

With all his pretensions, the editor has only contrived to make an unsightly piece of patchwork from Goldsmith, and some review articles. He employs the text of Goldsmith without remark, even after his scornful criticism; which reminds us of a similar spirit in the *Wild Tartar*, mentioned by *Hudibras*, who,

When he spies
A man that's handsome, valiant, wise,
If he can kill him, thinks t' inherit
His wit, his beauty, and his spirit :
As if just so much he enjoy'd,
As in another is destroy'd.

J.

THE CITY ARTICLE.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

THE ABOLITION of punishment by death is a measure demanded by the enlightened philanthropy of the times. We do not believe in all the schemes of social, political or moral reform, brought forward by those who call themselves philanthropists; the pretension of an individual is no measure of worth or right, but his abuse of the name should not injure the sacred cause of humanity. The ignorant errors of self-styled reformers, advocates of the re-organization of society, the crudities of men with one idea obtruded upon the community, should not deter us from the noble work of reform itself—which will ever remain for the exercise of the best minds, while society is in existence with the present inequality of conditions, the confusion of right and wrong, the existence of error in all shapes among its members. For the evils of society there is no cure but the efforts of reformers, and unhappy must that state be where the work of reform is regarded with contempt. Obvious as these remarks are, we cannot but think the neglect of them is the most general cause of whatever opposition has been made to the recent exertions for the abolition of capital punishment in this state. It is not unusual for many men, bound by their position in society and opportunities of education, to save themselves the labor of thought, and

dismiss any new claim upon their attention, by referring it to some popular class of objections or prejudices, conveniently at hand and plausible enough to satisfy their conscience and self-love. It gives a man an air of superiority to deny a proposition, though to the contempt of all intelligent observers he has to shelter himself under a paltry prejudice. By no other reason, than the prevalent indolence with regard to all new matters of inquiry, can we account for the fact that the resolution based upon the report of Mr. O'Sullivan is not now the law of the State.

The argument for the abolition of capital punishment is clear and obvious, and supported on every side by the example of fact and experiment. The prejudices in favor of the present system are weak and inefficient, and already have crumbled to pieces, leaving the statute in many cases a dead letter, of no force or efficiency without the sympathy of the public. There never was a matter more ripe for legislation than this—for the law would only express the sense of justice already indirectly uttered in the actions of the community. Cases arise in legislation in which the morality of the law is in advance of the morality of the people—where decision and courage are required on the part of the legislator—where his work has to be judged by after ages: but on this subject the mind of the people is already awake, and only the most ignorant prejudice can oppose it. But that prejudice must be overcome. So once again we must advance the old irrefragable arguments which have been the common property of all writers on this theme for the last hundred years.

In 1764, the Marquis Beccaria published his *Essay on Crimes and Punishments*, the enlightened judgment and humanity of which rank him with Howard, Franklin, Bentham, Edward Livingston, and those other philanthropists who have felt deeply and reasoned wisely on the misfortunes of social life. With a prescient spirit of wisdom, Beccaria opposed the theory and practice of capital punishment. His leading argument against its infliction is political; that it is the exertion of a power over the individual by the state, never conceded by any compact of its members. The sovereignty of the laws, he argues, is founded on the portions of liberty relinquished by each individual for the security of the rest in a well governed social state. "But no man would ever give to others the right of taking away his life. If it

were so, how shall it be reconciled to the maxim which tells us, that a man has no right to kill himself, which he certainly must have, if he could give it away to another."* This, it must be seen, involves a still higher principle—the idea of the sacred inviolability of human life: so sacred, that its destruction must ever rest on man or the nation as the greatest crime in the catalogue of sins. Suicide, war, murder, capital punishment, are all violations of the same high law, the sanctity, enforced by conscience and revelation, of the life of man, "made in the image of God." Reverence of human life and its objects is the foundation of every duty we can practice in this world; is obedience to the one great act of the Supreme in placing us in the world. Whoever seeks to injure that, commits the highest act of rebellion against the Sovereign of all.

If man cannot resign the right of life to society, neither can society assume it on the score of expediency. Fancied necessity never can make wrong to become right. Only in one case is there a necessity that permits the destruction of human life, the necessity of self-preservation; which applies both to the wars of the state and the homicide of the private citizen. But the exercise of this power is one of fearful responsibility, and even where it is rightly employed, good men may well weep over the fallen temple of the divine spirit of man. When evil passion is subdued by an all-embracing Christianity, war and homicide will cease: right they can never be, for the sad necessity that permits them comes from the most violent wrong.

Beccaria appeals to "the experience of all ages" to show, that the punishment of death has never answered the proposed end of deterring man from crime. It is inexpedient, for practically it has not been the most efficient safeguard to the welfare of society: its use has on the contrary multiplied crime; and philosophically it does not create by fear a sufficient barrier against the murderous hand of interest, jealousy, revenge.

The only ends of punishment are to restrain the guilty from further offence, to reform the perpetrator, and to hold out a warning to others to deter them from repeating the offence. If these objects are gained, it is all that society can have—

* Beccaria's Essay, Ch. xxviii.

and in one way or another they are all defeated by the present law for the punishment of death. The popular sentiment on a capital trial in the State of New York is always on the side of the criminal, ready to seize upon the slightest palliating circumstances to acquit a villain, sending him forth without amendment free upon society, rather than incur the guilt of taking his life. On this point Mr. O'Sullivan remarks in his able report,

"The *uncertainty of conviction*, by juries, for capital offences, has grown almost into a proverb. There can be no criminal lawyer in this State, of any extended practice or observation, by whom this remark will not be received as a truism. Even after the rejection from the panel, by challenge, of all who have formed a decided principle of action or opinion on this subject, juries are always, and will always be, powerfully swayed in their judgment, as well as in their feelings, by that horror of shedding the blood of their fellow man, which the laws of God have planted too deeply in the hearts of all to be eradicated, however it may be weakened by the influence of any laws of man. In the clearest cases, it is constantly seen they *will not* convict; and the criminal, whatever both the heinousness and the certainty of his guilt, must be singularly unfortunate indeed, if the ingenuity and eloquence of an able advocate cannot find, in the circumstances of the case, some point or other, great or small, on which he can urge to the hearts or the imagination of the jury such appeals, as cannot be counteracted without extreme difficulty by the sober voice of truth and justice. It is vain to talk of jurors' oaths. They *will* violate them, by what their consciences regard as only pious perjuries, under a thousand pleas of technical deficiencies or imperfections of evidence, however immaterial in their nature. In strong cases they will do it openly, and without even a shadow of other reason or justification, than simply this invincible repugnance which holds back their hands from the deed of blood."

The other end of punishment with regard to the guilty, to reform him, is wholly cut off, for "there is no device in the grave." The poor mockery of a religious service through the six weeks given to the convict between sentence and execution, under these circumstances, cannot be called reform. At best, it is to be feared, the miserable victim catches at self-delusion, and cheats himself into a fancied resignation

to the death he cannot help ; and we know in most cases his profligacy is hardened by excitement : he is fool-hardy by despair, and perhaps he goes out of the world wreaking his last spite and malice in insults on the only being within his reach, the devoted prison chaplain. If we believe that the welfare of the soul in the next world depends upon its virtuous discipline and education in this, we cannot cut off the life of a human being. The man, indeed, who commits the crime of murder, must forfeit many social privileges and lose many opportunities of self-improvement ; for the welfare of society requires a fearful punishment for his crime, in imprisonment for life. He is cut off from wife and children, and the sweet discipline of home ; the thousand incidental influences which form the manly character in the varied contact of men in society, indeed, he cannot share ; he loses the impulses of men engaged in one common cause for political or social advancement ; he is not stimulated by the enthusiasm of the crowd ; his faculties are not sharpened by the inferior pursuits of interest or trade ; he is no longer free with Nature to follow her infinite variety over hill and dale, and read in the wilful sport and energy of the elements the response to the restless passion of his own heart. The noble education of a free man struggling in the world he has forfeited, but under the direction of a wise and benevolent legislation much is left. The prisoner confined, it is true, alone, may have all the opportunities of physical health, the occupation of a trade, the use of books, with proper religious and secular instruction. Though necessarily imperfect compared with the education he might receive in the world, his situation would be better than that of many imprisoned to the dull walls of a sick chamber by disease. He might still amend. He might have time for reflection and repentance, and might learn to connect the idea of duty with his daily labor and respect for his teachers. We can conceive a man living virtuously and dying happily in a prison, when, if the gallows were the punishment, his end would be one at which reason and religion alike teach us to shudder.

For them most needeth comfort in the end,
When Sin, and Hell, and Death, doe most dismay
The feeble soul, departing hence away.
All is but lost, that living we bestow,
If not well ended at our dying day.
O man ! have mind of that last bitter throw ;
For as the tree does fall, so lies it ever low.

The remaining condition of punishment is, that it be such as may deter others from the like crime. For this, as a preventive of murder, the fear of death is inadequate. This fear, indeed, where it is felt in its intensity, when the calm voice of reason or reflection announces to a man the coming dissolution of those ties with earth which every effort of life has only bound more strongly, when the thought of death is aggravated by doubt or despair, is the most terrible of human emotions. But the impression of death, even to the man of reflection, is but momentary; it is equally transient and far weaker in force with the inferior class, who are most likely to incur its penalty. On this subject the philosophy of Beccaria does not fail him. "It is not the intenseness of the pain," says he, "that has the greatest effect on the mind, but its continuance; for our sensibility is more easily and more powerfully affected by weak but repeated impressions, than by a violent but momentary impulse. The power of habit is universal over every sensible being. As it is by that we learn to speak, to walk, and to satisfy our necessities, so the ideas of morality are stamped on our minds by repeated impressions. The death of a criminal is a terrible but momentary spectacle, and therefore a less efficacious method of deterring others than the continued example of a man deprived of his liberty, condemned, as a beast of burden, to repair by his labor the injury he has done to society. If I commit such a crime, says the spectator to himself, I shall be reduced to that miserable condition for the rest of my life. A much more powerful preventive than the fear of death, which men always behold in distant obscurity." This argument might be enforced by passages from philosophy, by the practical evidence of facts, but to our minds the conclusion is irresistible. Succeeding writers have added nothing to the forcible statement of Beccaria.

The objections to the abolition of capital punishment range themselves under one or other of these three heads: either that the penalty is commanded in the Bible, and it is a matter of religious duty to adhere to it; that it is the most signal punishment for the offence, and one that will best conduce to the preservation of society; or that compared with its substitute, solitary imprisonment for life, it is really the most humane for the subject of it. The second and third of these objections have been answered in the preceding remarks: we have seen that capital punishment is inefficient

for the end proposed, and that it is more humane to reform a murderer than to hang him with the burden of sin on the soul. For the first objection, we can regard it only as a prejudice, based upon a false statement of a passage accompanied by an immediate withholding this power from man and reserving it for God alone. "At the hand of every man will *I* require it." The reader may profitably consult the report of Mr. O'Sullivan, for an elaborate reply to this reiterated prejudice.

Facts drawn from the history of crime might be quoted in support of these various positions, but we do not argue this question by the support of facts and statistics; these the knowledge of every intelligent citizen who has watched the course of criminal jurisprudence will easily supply: to all, the fullest materials for the confirmation of the principle we advocate may be found in the different works devoted to this subject, and especially in the elaborate report of Mr. O'Sullivan, to whose ingenious argument and philanthropic views, the friends of reform are largely indebted. The argument drawn from statistics is commonly unsatisfactory; the facts of any case are after all but imperfectly known; many, perhaps the most important, may be omitted, others misrepresented, and at best they partake of the weakness of human evidence, and the judgment based upon them, of human frailty. But if there is one principle felt to be true, irresistible to the conscience and reason, that is involved in the question—on this fearlessly taking our stand, we may speak with a more settled conviction, an intuitive sense of right, a diviner judgment, than can be drawn from the exact deductions, the most careful impressions of facts. Not on questions of expediency, but of right, is the matter to be argued. The last court of appeal is the court of conscience—here sits the enlightened judge. This principle is the sacred inalienable right of human life, the preservation of which is the highest test of civilization and true government. This is illustrated by the mode in which punishment by death has been administered. As punishments have become less cruel, society, leaving the barbarous state, (in which life is lightly regarded), has become more virtuous. Compare the complicated machinery of justice in ancient times with its present simplicity: the neglected barbarous customs of the old English common law, the severities of trial by battle, the tests of witchcraft, are stories now for the amusement of

children. The gallows has shrunk from the highway into the retirement of the cloistered prison ; legislation is ashamed of wreaking its inhuman vengeance in the light of day before the assembled people : the next movement, it requires no spirit of prophecy to predict, will be to abandon it for ever. D.

THE FINE ARTS.

THE BALLET.

FANNY ELSSLER has again returned to the Park, after a brilliant winter at the South, and with her, once more the ballet reigns supreme. The theatre that was deserted in the winter, at the only season when crowded houses are tolerable, is now, from night to night, in this summer month of June, filled with eager audiences. The newspapers prophesied a decline of the Elssler mania ; the share of Elssler of the first night's engagement proved to be eight hundred dollars ! An enthusiasm in which the press does not share is to many people a miracle ; we shall endeavor to account for it. Undoubtedly, fashion, as alleged, has much to do with the matter. The audience is composed of several distinct classes : one of which is easily selected, as the fashionable. This is the mob who follow wherever they are led ; whose presence tells nothing in favor of any cause, who ought as little to prejudice any. The same faces and figures would soon be seen filling the seats of a church, to the exclusion of better men, were any great pulpit orator to appear in the city. The appearance of these people indicates nothing but their own folly ; which is very visibly written in every fold of their dress, every lineament of the countenance, every turn of the eye. The part they play is a very harmless one—nay, sometimes it has its uses, for it is no uncommon thing for the eccentricity of this class in the boxes to afford, in the intervals of the acts, a great deal of entertaining mirth, to the good sense of the democracy in the pit. The press is sometimes very indignant that such worthless fops should lead the admiration of the audience ; but they do not lead, they only follow. They may be regarded as the lacqueys and attendants of the men of wit ; and as the servants of the great are commonly more studiously dressed than their masters, these keep up the resemblance by a proper display of jewelry and new coats.

The Ballet has a firmer support in the opposite class of the most intelligent. The true secret of its success is, that it has heart and soul—it appeals to the sentiment. The dance, as portrayed to the eye in airy measure by Elssler, invokes latent ideas of grace and harmony; it reaches a sentiment of beauty little cultivated here as a study, but which in ancient Greece gave birth to the most exquisite proportions in sculpture, architecture, the severe graceful form of literature itself. There is a limit of correctness, a source of refinement in the merely sensual. As we turn from Elssler on the stage, to the female figures around us, who does not wish that they moved and walked like her. This involuntary compliment of admiration, should teach us to pause before we censure, and “distil the soul of goodness.” A wise man, in his thorough accomplished education, will reject no just sentiments of his nature; he will cultivate all his faculties; those which are ministered to by his senses, as well as the intellect. If there is an art of eating he will find it out; or a science of hearing, or a poetry of motion. This innate desire for cultivation of beauty, in the movements of the form, is met, until we see a better dancer, by the performances of Elssler. If the common prejudices against the ballet were verified, we should find that the most successful dancers were the grossest; that the best of this kind, in the popular estimation, were the worst; but this is not the case with Elssler. The audience, generally, is composed of the most intelligent and cultivated; the coarse and vulgar prefer coarse and vulgar dancing. The number of old men who attend the theatre on these occasions, has been remarked; we have thought them none the older, or nearer the folly of age, as the eye brightened at the sight of the infantine simplicity of motion on the stage.

After what we have written, we need not say that we regard dancing as an art. It is to be feared that some, dazzled by the novelty for the time, mistake it for the chief, or only art. Much as we admire the Ballet, as a source of gratification, and like all pure delight, of useful culture, we would still remember what is due to the other departments of the Drama. It should hold only its proportionate rank on the stage. It should not drive lofty tragedy from the boards, with her higher lessons controlling human passion—exciting kindling motives for human effort; it should not mar gayer comedy, with her varied instructions of counterplots, masks and laughter; it should even spare poor farce, with its drolleries and incongruities. But we would place it by the side of opera, which presents, perhaps, as wide a departure from the legitimate drama; for the difference between the two is only that, in the Ballet dancing and pantomime are substituted for singing.

THE THEATRE AT NIBLO'S.

THE entertainments at Niblo's are an evidence of what the Drama might be, and how well sustained, if divorced from certain peculiar features that disfigure it at the larger houses. From this circumstance, the audiences differ essentially from any other; including many faces that never show themselves in any other theatre, and many coats of a solemnity and demureness of cut that would never grace the benches of the Bowery, the Chatham, or even the more staid and chastened Park. Niblo's houses are in the main pure and unsophisticated, and such as relish thoroughly whatever is presented. All the pleasure-seeking malcontents of the town haunt his Saloon and Garden. We are pleased to see this, as well for the encouragement it furnishes to the cause of pure stage performances, as the reward to the spirit and enterprize of the proprietor.

The chief supports of the establishment at the present season are, Chippendale—the best general actor, we are inclined to think, in this city, if not in the Union—whom we have seen to advantage in a cockney barber, (in Burlington Arcade), and as a monosyllabic sexton, (in Angeline Le Lis); Lambert, with a comic twang in his voice, and excellent in Uncle Fozzle and other pragmatistical old gentlemen; Bishop; Miss Ayres, grown a trifle too stout; Miss J. Wallack, a pleasing tenor; and Chapman, with a savour of genius in everything he undertakes. With these, in spite of all counter-attractions, Mr. Niblo must be wafted through a pleasant and profitable season.

M

THE LOITERER.

The Science of Government, founded on Natural Law. BY CLINTON ROOSEVELT. New-York: Dean & Trevett, 121 Fulton Street. 1841.

IF one were to go out on a day—if such a day there could be—when the clouds were falling piece-meal to the earth—earth itself breaking up from internal spasms—and the sea pitching about uneasily in its bed, as if it would turn on its side and overlay the continent—he would have perhaps a more sublime, but nevertheless very similar sensation, to that which is excited by an entry upon the pages of this new Apocalypse of Mr. Roosevelt. Discomfort, uncertainty, and a vague wonder as to what the end of all this disjointure and chaos will be, are the feelings in-

spired by the twelvemo in which he undertakes to disavow all past orders and conditions of things, prefatory to a grand re-construction on a new basis.

Mr. Roosevelt contemplates the world through stained glasses, and like all social theorists, stung by the undoubted evils, wrongs and inequalities of society, would fain sweep out of sight whatever it accomplishes of good. All social changes must begin in the mind of man, and work their way outward into action and conduct. It is, it seems to us, an ignoble and unworthy view of our nature to suppose that its whole destinies hang on forms of government, fiscal agencies, and the regulation of the exchanges. God forbid that it should be in the power of any man or men to trample or fetter the spirit, by enactments merely arbitrary and legislative: enactments, too, relating only to trade and commerce. Let Reform and Re-organization begin at the heart's core: let noble and manly thoughts and principles of action be there planted by the hand of generous instruction; and the social state—for we have that trust in human nature—will bloom with a healthful and cheerful beauty. We have faith in man, and hope of social progress, but it cannot arise from systems and the ingenious marshallings of Mr. Roosevelt, or the artful phalanxes and masses of Mr. Brisbane.

Truth is figured of old to reside in the form of a fair and lovely woman, and not in a piece of mechanism or artificiality, however skilfully constructed. Mankind cannot be straitened and restrained by mechanical contrivances, like so many pike-staffs or water-pipes, but must be governed by impulses springing from every part of an ample nature—hope, love, charity, faith, ambition, reverence for God, trust in their fellows. Whatever can be suggested, by philosopher or layman, that aids in the culture of these great powers and mainsprings of our social being, is well worth heeding. In Mr. Roosevelt's book itself there are—through a certain severity and rugged abruptness of style—occasional gleams of truth, which might guide to useful results—but for the most part baleful, volcanic and treacherous. Sampson bore away the gates of Gaza: we doubt whether our author has sufficient puissance to unhinge the social order, and open the way to a new condition of government.

M

Biography and Poetical Remains of the late Margaret Miller Davidson. BY WASHINGTON IRVING. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard. 1841.

THE care of Washington Irving has been shown in the preparation of this volume as a tasteful editor. It is a simple record of

the early maturity of the poetical faculty, in the extreme youth of a girl of great purity and sensibility of mind : illustrated by materials drawn from her own poems, her letters, and the recollections of an intelligent mother. The quiet history of the fire-side furnishes all the incidents, with scarcely a single episode, unless we may so regard the visit of the "English gentleman," whose name is not mentioned, while yet his introduction by a few appropriate allusions betrays the delicate pen of Irving. "His manners, appearance and conversation, and, above all, the extraordinary interest with which he regarded her, sank deep in the affectionate heart of the child. His departure from the country was a severe disappointment to Margaret, who had conceived for him an enthusiastic friendship. His letter was accompanied by presents of books and various tasteful remembrances, but the sight of them only augmented her affliction. She wrapped them all carefully in paper, and treasured them up in a particular drawer, where they were daily visited and many a tear shed over them." At the age of six years, Miss Davidson would recite passages of verse, and, on being requested to write them down, would connect them as prose, so unconscious was she of the rhythmical process. She showed an early talent of story-telling, and if we remember aright resembled Mrs. Hemans in the early possession of both these faculties. About the age of ten, she contrived the writing and getting up of a "Tragedy of Alethia," a slight work which showed great aptness and readiness of resources. We are more interested by the exquisite tenderness and sentiment of her character, than by her talent, which, however extraordinary, was only the spectacle of the premature developement of the faculties of later life. The pictures of her illness and death may remind the reader of similar scenes in the touching portrait of Nell. There are many of the most beautiful traits of the novelist here : the air of sanctity, the forbearance of complaint, at times the tender secret sorrow that she should die, *so young*, the early death at the age of fifteen. "Except when very ill," writes her mother, "she was a bright dreamer. Her visions were usually of an unearthly cast : about heaven and angels. She was wandering among the stars ; her sainted sisters were her pioneers ; her cherub brother walked hand in hand with her through the gardens of paradise."

In all her pursuits, the daughter was the companion of her mother—but the fate of Miss Davidson was written in her fragile constitution, which no mother's care of education could alter. It is the custom of weak parents to overload the quick susceptible intellectual faculties of their children, when they show signs of early developement ; but in the present case there is nothing of this kind to regret.

Fragments from German Prose Writers. TRANSLATED BY SARAH AUSTIN. Illustrated with Notes. London: John Murray. 1841.

THE evidence afforded us by a work like the present, on the fertile theme of German literature, is far more genuine than could be given by a professed volume of Specimens or Beauties. The fragments are extracts from the note book of a diligent and accomplished student of the authors, a lady to whom the public has acknowledged its thanks for her "Characteristics of Goethe." They are gleaned from the study of the most opposite writers: civilians, philosophers, men of learning, science, professors of theology, poets, essayists; but through all of them, are visible a few striking qualities. The foremost of these is sincerity. Whatever the authors have to say, they say it in earnest. The style is characterized by its faithfulness and particularity. The writer is not ashamed of his daily life, or its minuteness, but infuses the commonest details with the spirit and force of a strong mind. The motto of a German is, that the life that is worth living is worth writing about; and he goes on to give us realities. This is first the wonder, then the charm of Jean Paul, for instance—his familiarity and his reverence. There is nothing "common or unclean," nothing too low to be elevated by the lofty mind.

With this reality is united the wisest æsthetical culture, disciplining the various powers. Thus, the literature is rich in its resources, from the single faculty of the minor author, to the collected self-possession, various training, and wisdom of Goethe. We might point out sentiment reigning in one, fancy in another, judgment in a third, and good sense the basis of each; a golden thread connecting all together in a network of poetry and argument.

One of the fragments is an Eulogy of the German Character, from the pen of an old writer in the sixteenth century. Written at that time, before the present literature was thought of, it may be regarded as prophecy from the very elements of the national mind; and doubtless, then the seeds were sown of that very excellence in the literature to be gathered in so late a harvest in the nineteenth century. Let Americans not despair of a National Literature; the Germans were a great people long before the world was really taught so in their books. "The German people," wrote old Jacobus Polychorus, "is more especially a trustworthy, veracious, constant, bold and manly people; likewise liberal, mild, hospitable, undaunted, laborious, temperate, honest, cheerful-minded, and covetous of a good name; one that in all things seeketh to lead the wits of men, and to be beforehand

in all knowledge." This is a noble rent-roll of virtues for a nation's or an individual's patrimony.

We glean a few passages from the volume, which, as it appears to us, are worth thinking of at present.

OF PREMATURE EDUCATION.—"How did he long after the learning and the teachers of whose existence he had a dim presentiment! But so much the better! It is only hunger that digests, it is only love that fertilizes; the sigh of longing is the *aura seminalis* which must quicken the Orpheus egg of knowledge. This you bethink not yourselves of, you expeditious teachers, who give your children drink before you give them thirst—who grant young souls no quiet hours—but, like unskillful vine-dressers, are ever busy about the young vines, trimming, manuring and pruning them even in the season of their blossoming. And now, after having driven them untimely, and with unripe organs, into the great empire of truth and beauty, thus blunting them against lovely nature, can you in any way compensate to them for that Great Year which they would have lived, if they had grown up, like the new created Adam and looked around the magnificent, intellectual world with open thirsty mind? Hence is it that your pupils are so like footpaths, which in spring are green the earliest, but afterwards are but a sere and yellow track through the blooming meadow."—*Jean Paul*.

OF POVERTY.—"One solitary philosopher may be great, virtuous and happy in the depth of poverty, but not a whole people."—*Isaak Iselin*.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.—"They came, saw and conquered—all who were at table expecting them. Heavens! they were enlightened, eighteenth-century men. They stood up stoutly for moderate freedom, and good amusing reading, and moderate deism, and moderate philosophy. They delivered themselves most clearly against the apparition of spirits—against all allusions and all extremes. They liked very well to read their poets—as models of style to be advantageously used in business, and as relaxations from solid affairs; they relished nightingales—roasted; and liked myrtles as Spanish bakers do—to heat their ovens with; they had killed the great Sphynx, who sets us the riddle of life, and carried off the stuffed hide, and they held it for a wonder that anybody else could now submit to be puzzled. Genius, said they, we would certainly not throw away; we would keep it for sale. And their icy souls burnt but for one object—for the body; this is solid and real; this is the true state, and religion, and art."—*Jean Paul*.

POETRY.—"There are so many tender and holy emotions flying about in an inward world, which, like angels, can never assume the body of an outward act; so many rich and lovely flowers spring up which bear no seed, that it is a happiness poetry was invented, which receives into its limbus all these incorporeal spirits, and the perfume of all these flowers."—*Jean Paul*.

Watch Returns. REPORTED FOR THE BROTHER JONATHAN. New York: Wilson & Company, 162 Nassau-Street.

The writer of these sketches of Police Reports, who is understood to be J. M. MOORE, Esq., which appear constantly in the columns of the Brother Jonathan newspaper has evidently a genius for his vocation. Though an art thought peculiarly to belong to the skilful reporters of the London press, we have it in its greatest perfection in New-York. No city extant perhaps offers better materials for the humorist, for here meet the unfortunate refugees of all nations, crossed and intermingled with a miscellaneous native population, not deficient in humors compared with any on the face of the earth. It will happen that in the various exhibi-

tions of human nature among such a people, a few will periodically revolve before the desk of the magistrate to answer for a variety of eccentricities, peccadilloes and petty crimes, which however allowable in the benevolent eyes of a philosopher, are precisely those which police magistrates were first contrived and set up to prevent. The faithful scribe sitting by the side of the bar of petty judgment will observe many rare traits of human nature in her undress, as she is brought up in the early daylight to answer for the misdemeanors of the day before. It has been objected to the exhibition of this class of humors, in writing, that crime and misfortune are not legitimate subjects of laughter; that the hardness of feeling that lurks in a jest makes us forgetful of those finer impulses of pity we should feel at such recitals. Now we cannot but think this a mistake. To the Heraclitus class of philosophers, who think this world is chiefly a spectacle to weep over, there is doubtless here a reasonable fund of tears, but we maintain that to a really wise and benevolent philosopher, uncramped and unafflicted with theories, the bright side of this dark picture is necessary as well as the shade. It is not that we love human nature less that we find amusement in her misfortunes, but that being friends to cheerfulness and mirth, we cling to such little portions of either as we can find in the darkest circumstances. If a man in a tattered garb laughs, his misfortune is so much diminished. If he is a wit, and wits are apt to be bankrupt, his mirth is so much the more eminent. There is a variety of classes of crime and punishments, between which some distinction should be kept up; the villain in high life should look serious, while on the contrary he commonly plays the part of the gay villain; the poor devil who offends in the least injurious particulars, partly from necessity and habit, may be allowed to smile.

We confess we can see no more inhumanity in drawing amusement from the circumstances of the lower classes, than in these very lower classes sporting so liberally over the manners of the wealthy; provided in both the amusement be drawn in a spirit of honesty without malice. The class of humorists and lovers of humor are proverbially benevolent; it is the cynical and morose who refuse alms and violate the charities of life. We have no doubt the Reporter of the Brother Jonathan is at heart a benevolent man: the minuteness of his pictures shows a sympathy with his small heroes that could only spring from love, disguise it with ridicule as he may. At any rate we have pleasure in quoting one of his recent speculations for the relish of true humor, at bottom. It is evidence in favor of the genuineness, if the auther be, as we believe he is, an Irishman.

AN OLD FRIEND.

The sunny weather has brought out the loafers, and the codgers, and the dock wallopers again, in all their glory.—Many old faces, which we have not seen, or which have only visited us in our dreams, since the fall of the leaf, are again beginning to manifest themselves in the watch house ; but alas ! we also find many who by birth, genius and inclination, should adorn that establishment, among the missing, by reason that some of them have betaken themselves to the world of spirits—some to speculate in the regions of the upper police office—and that not a few have followed the way of most loafer's flesh—i. e. gone to Blackwell's Island.

And, by the way, we here beg leave to enter our protest against the modern practice, most feloniously indulged in by the new magistrates, of sending loafers to the Island any time between the months of April and October. Loafers should be permitted to flourish, so long as the trees flourish ; and only punished for their sins during the season when there is no chance for enjoyment out of doors, and when a good fire makes imprisonment and oakum-picking decidedly luxurious. That man has no true poetry in his soul, who does not feel that our loafers, especially our thorough-bred pump-scratching, genuine up-and-down no-mistake dock-loafers, are the peculiar ornament and pride of our city in the hot season ; and that any one who would wilfully deprive us of them, would be just such a fellow as would have robbed Lazarus of his share of the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.

We were led into this train of reflection by the appearance of an old friend in the watch-house this morning—an old and valued friend—the very prince of his tribe—who thinks, but is by no means sure of it, that his name is Jemmy Hickey—and who has some odd notions that he might have had a mother in his time ; but is occasionally possessed with the philosophical idea, that some men have mothers, and that others grow like potatoes.

When we say that Jemmy is the tallest kind of a no-mistake practical philosopher, we mean what we say. Give Jemmy a kicking on a cold day and he'll thank you for it, on the ground that it puts his blood in circulation, and makes him feel comfortable ; and he finds an enjoyment in all his misfortunes—or, at least what other men would call misfortunes—on the same principle. Jemmy, of course, never washes his face, unless when he accidentally rolls into one of the docks, which occasionally happens when he has been a little too free in his devotions to a stray hogshead of rum ; and if you ask him why he don't wash his face, Jemmy will tell you that its 'unnatral to take any thing away that natur puts on the body to save it from the weather ;' and thus whatever falls to Jemmy's share in the line of hair, beard, whiskers, mud, dirt, &c. &c. &c., is graciously permitted to remain there, and to do duty in lieu of his general deficiency in the more popular articles—such as shirt, stockings, &c.—of the wardrobes of common-place people.

Jemmy rarely troubles himself about anything but the main chance—i. e. looking out for a piece of junk ; hooking an apple from a stall, or tapping a liquor hogshead ; but nevertheless, he occasionally indulges in politics, albeit he isn't quite sure that Great Britain don't lie somewhere down towards the middle of New Jersey, and that General Washington isn't still President of the United States. But there are two things he is quite sure of—i. e., that the world will never go on well until people give over working, and take to philosophy ; and that junk-stealing in general should be regarded as a profession, and not as petty larceny.

Jemmy don't know how old he is, or where he was born ; and he has never been out of New York, unless when making his annual pilgrimages to Blackwell's Island ;—and he lodges nowhere in particular, but patronises all open halls, cellars and gate-ways in general ; of course varying the entertainment by an occasional luxuriation on the velvet banks of the Park or Battery ; and Jemmy never worked an hour in the whole course of his life—(oakum-picking excepted) and entertains the worst sort of a contempt for any one that does work ;—and Jemmy never strips from the moment he equips himself in a new garment until it goes to pieces, and falls off of its own accord.

And in short Jemmy Hickey is in all points the very perfection of a New York dock loafer, and as such we trust he may live for ever, and that his shadow may never be less.

The re-appearance of our friend, Mr. Hickey, has thrown us into such a state of rapture that we have lost sight of the cause that brought him to the watch-house ; which was neither more nor less than a charge of stealing a cap from a little boy's head ; Jemmy, however, repelled the charge with scorn, resting his defence on his

former *good* character; for when his worship asked him if he was sure he didn't steal the cap?

'Vy, to be sure I is,' answered Jemmy, 'cos as how your vorship knows I never steals nothing but junk, vich if right vos right, wouldn't be stealing no how; an' also as how all the cap stealin' as is done down about the docks is done by von Billy Martin, who keeps all that ere line of bizness to hisself, an' wont have no hopposition.'

And his worship (all sorts of good luck to him for that same) took Jemmy's evidence of his innocence as conclusive, for there was no proof direct against him touching the hooking of the cap, and ordered him to make himself as scarce as possible.

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Collections of the New York Historical Society. SECOND SERIES,
VOL. I. New York: Printed for the Society. 1841. 8vo.
pp. 486.

THE contents of this volume are of remarkable interest and value. It includes a valuable historical discourse by Chancellor Kent; an original translation of Verazzano's Voyage, by J. G. Cogswell; a translation of Lambrecht's History of New Netherlands, a Dutch historian of the present day; a translation of Vander Donck's description of New Netherlands, a work hitherto unapproachable in English, and of great rarity in the original: translations by the Editor, George Folsom, from De Laet's New World, a Dutch writer who had access to Henry Hudson's journal; passages of the journal of Juet, the mate of the HALF MOON, from Purchas' Pilgrims; various documents from the Colonial Records; a catalogue of the members of the Dutch Church in the city of New York, A. D. 1686, and many other important articles, accompanied with a map of the Colony, a drawing of the U. S. Government House, and a mezzotinto portrait of Peter Stuyvesant.

The work is ably edited, in a solid and unpretending manner, by George Folsom, the present Librarian of the Society. The materials are arranged in an accurate and scientific form; the notes are pertinent, and the book altogether, in design and execution, contrasts favorably with the former publications of the Society. We are pleased to see that a new series has been adopted, and trust that a work so honorably begun will be pursued with the same energy and spirit. The next volume, it is said, will embrace various curious tracts relating to the early history of Virginia, and will be edited by Rev. Dr. Hawks.

In a few prefatory remarks we perceive the editor has revived the old fault-finding with Washington Irving's humorous Knickerbocker, for its ridicule of the Dutch. This is rather late in the day, when the work has taken its place on the shelf as a classic. The truth of the matter really is, that Irving's mock-heroic burlesque, so far from interfering with the dignity of history, rather

attracts and invites us to the original heroes themselves. The present work will be read with more interest for the sake of old associations with Knickerbocker—instead of being a source of contempt, the harmless jests of Irving ought rather to be a matter of pride with all genuine New-Yorkers. The names mentioned in Knickerbocker belong to the gentility and refinement of the elder days—his veracious chronicle is a test of ancestry; and should Americans ever grow aristocratic, will be referred to as implicitly as the celebrated Roll of Battle Abbey in England, and the followers of Peter Stuyvesant to Fort Christina be as immortal as the companions of William the Conqueror at Hastings.

9

The Progress of Democracy; illustrated in the history of Gaul and France. BY ALEXANDER DUMAS. Translated by an American. New York: J. & H. G. Langley. 1841.

THIS is the most philosophical chart of French history we have ever seen; the most comprehensive, and yet the most distinct epitome of modern civilization in the most refined state of continental Europe. The author, a democrat of enlarged views, is remarkable for acuteness and condensed vigor. His romances and tragedies have left marks of their composer on many pages of this narrative. The book is a singular union of the dry analyst and the picturesque chronicler. It is in many places as dry and bald as Crowes' History of France, or Mr. Grattan in his History of the Netherlands: the two books, of all others we can recollect, on which the seal of unmitigable dullness is indelibly impressed; and yet at least one half of it is spirited, lively, and graceful; abounding in brilliant portraits, pithy apophthegms, novel illustrations, and glowing descriptions.

The progress of the democratic principle is traced through three epochs.—I. The Franco-Roman monarchy, from the first settlement of Gaul by the Romans, to the accession of Pepin. II. The Frank monarchy, to Hugh Capet; and III. From his reign to Philip, the first monarch of the house of Valois. The conclusion embraces a summary of the whole French history to the present king. The growth of the popular strength is chronologically recorded; the gradual decline of monarchical authority is regularly measured.

A striking feature of the book is the amount of curious yet most useful knowledge it contains.

The translation is exceedingly well executed. It has all the freshness of an original production.

As a specimen of the author's skill in grouping characters—in

which he succeeds to the same perfection that he does in grouping events—we quote a few sentences. He is pointing out the analogy subsisting between those of the kings who re-organized the society of the different epochs, and those who composed that society.

“Louis Phillippe, with his costume so well known as to be proverbial, his manners so simple as to become a model,—is he not the type of the great landed and operative interests?”

“Louis XV., with his coat of velvet, covered with embroidery and spangles, his silken vest, his sword with hilt of steel and knot of ribbons, his profligate manners, his libertine spirit, his selfishness for the present and recklessness for the future,—is he not a complete type of the aristocrats?”

“Francis I., with his cap surmounted by plumes, his doublet of silk, his shoes of slashed velvet, his spirit elegantly haughty, and his manners nobly debauched,—is he not a perfect type of the grand seignior?”

“And Hugh Capet, their common ancestor, encased in his iron cuirass, leaning on his iron sword, and severe in his iron manners,—does he not appear, standing on the horizon of monarchy, an exact type of the grand vassalage?”

J.

The Life of Petrarch. BY THOMAS CAMPBELL. Philadelphia :
Carey & Hart. 1 vol. 8vo.

We can scarcely bring ourselves to speak of a work written by Campbell with a proper degree of critical impartiality. The Classical Poet of our youthful days has claims on our attachment that no subsequent sins of commission can efface. We feel a common interest in his fame, and a consequent regret on the appearance of any work that can in no wise increase it. All that patient industry and research could effect, has been already done for the elucidation of the Life and Times of Petrarch, as bear witness the Nine Hundred Volumes of the “*Bibliotheca Petrarquesca*” in the library of the King of France. Had the theme been a favorite one with Campbell, no fitter Biographer existed to condense and animate this ponderous mass—but the whole character of the book betrays its real origin as a mere piece of Literary task work, in which the author engaged at the will of a bookseller, with scarce an average knowledge of the History and Literature of the time. As might be expected, a total want of sympathy with his subject is apparent in every page of the life—the weaknesses and inconsistencies of Petrarch are reviewed with a keen-eyed, worldly glance, inconsistent with a true appreciation of the poetical character; indeed he is frequently lost to our view amid the stirring political transactions of the age, that form the back-ground of the narrative. A ceaseless flippancy of style, debased by continual use of the lowest colloquialisms, is but too conspicuous throughout the book, and we cannot notice without regret, the ungracious and petulant spirit of criticism on his pre-

decessors, habitually indulged in by the present Biographer. That the book contains much vigorous writing, and is enlivened with many sparkling observations, needs no assurance—it is with reference to the high standard erected by the author himself that the work will be judged and condemned. *C.W.*

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- I. Quadruple Boston Notion. O. Roberts.
 - II. The Ladies' Magazine, 8vo. Monthly. E. G. Squier, Albany.
 - III. The New-York Athenæum. Weekly.
 - IV. Life in New-York. Weekly, folio.
 - V. The Gothamite : small 4to. Semi-monthly.
 - VI. The Military Magazine. Monthly.

HERE is a sea-full of sails, from the light perogue to the quadruple sheeted Boston galleon, (R. W. GRISWOLD, Master,) that carries all before it. We see at the helm, commanders of various skill and enterprise, but in the main, men of a jovial and hearty temperament, and well entitled to cruise in the waters they are launched upon. Even while we look, two of them (the "Athenæum" and "Life in New York,") have vanished by some mischance or other ; but the others, so far as we can see, keep on with good resolution, as if they had a profitable port in view. We trust they have ; and that the present sudden growth is, to shift the figure, an evidence of a healthful soil, and not of any fungous tendency in the literary crop. *M*

Life and Literary Remains of L. E. L. BY LAMAN BLANCHARD.
2 vols. 12mo. Philadelphia : Lea & Blanchard.

THE charm that for years attached to the mysterious letters, L. E. L., so fatally dissipated by the intelligence of her premature death, has revived on the perusal of these volumes. A purer, simpler hearted being, or one more universally beloved, than Miss Landon, it is impossible to imagine : yet the very qualities that most endeared her to her friends—her noble frankness of spirit and conduct—occasioned the most improbable calumnies that embittered many of her years, and cast the dark shade over her "golden prime," that tinges all her works. Mr. Blanchard has faithfully discharged his duty to the dead, by presenting us with copious extracts from her correspondence, connected by a chain of narrative, written without pretence but sufficiently full to convey a vivid impression of the genius and worth of this ill-fated lady. The second volume is composed of her fugitive writings,

now first collected, an unpublished tragedy, etc., all displaying the same wealth of imagination and richness of diction that characterise her former works.

CW

WILLIS GAYLORD CLARK.—We have to record the death of this accomplished prose writer and poet, within the last month at Philadelphia, in the thirty-second year of his age. The testimony borne to the worth and excellence of his character by the press has been unanimous. Mr. Clark was the author of a series of papers entitled *Ollapodiana*, in the *Knickerbocker*, which exhibit the warmth and enthusiasm of his mind. His poetry was marked by elegance, tenderness, and a luxuriousness of language. The best tribute we can offer to the memory of an author is, to cherish his verses. The following lines, which we have lighted upon by chance, exhibit the poet's enjoyment of life; they are of a more cheerful strain than others which might have been selected, and thus we would always think of the dead, associating their memory with their best enjoyments of earth. The lines are from a poem, "The Spirit of Life," delivered at Brown University, in 1833.

"Who that hath stood, when summer brightly lay
On some broad city, by a spreading bay,
And from a rural height the scene surveyed,
While on the distant strand the billows played,
But felt the vital spirit of the scene,
What time the south wind strayed through foliage green,
And freshened from the dancing waves, went on,
By the gay groves, and fields, and gardens won.
Oh, who that listens to the inspiring sound,
Which the wide Ocean wakes against his bound,
While, like some fading hope, the distant sail
Flits o'er the dim blue waters, in the gale;
When the tired sea-bird dips his wings in foam,
And hies him to his beetling eyry home;
When sun-gilt ships are parting from the strand,
And glittering streamers by the breeze are fanned;
When the wide city's domes and piles aspire,
And rivers broad seem touched with golden fire—
Save where some gliding boat their lustre breaks,
And volumed smoke its murky tower forsakes,
And surging in dark masses, soars to lie,
And stain the glory of the uplifted sky;
Oh, who at such a scene unmoved hath stood,
And gazed on town, and plain, and field, and flood—
Nor felt that life's keen spirit lingered there,
Through earth, and ocean, and the genial air?"
